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OR,
THE ARCH HERESY.

BY
JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES,
AUTHOR OF "VIRGINIUS," "THE HUNCHBACK," &c.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

WERE we not told, in Sacred Writ, that the Almighty visits with spiritual blindness, those who resist His word, and depart from it, it would be a matter of astonishment that the Roman church should have openly and unmistakeably denounced herself, in giving to her presiding priest the title which he bears,—that of “Pope,” or “Father,”—a title which, with respect to His church, Christ

has appropriated exclusively to the first person in the Trinity : “ Neither call
“ any man your father upon the earth,
“ for one is your Father, which is in
“ Heaven.”

The head of the Roman church bears, with avowed reference to the church of Christ, the title of “ Father ! ” The alleged vicar of Christ—the alleged vicerent of Christ—flies in the face of the King whom he professes to represent ; and violates, in the face of the whole world, an injunction which is one of the most solemn in the whole Christian code !

Supposing Peter to have been what the Roman church asserts, will any man be so mad as to argue that he would have presumed to take such a title—or that any of his brethren would have dared to bestow such a title upon him, in defiance

of a prohibition so unqualified, explicit, and direct? The head of the Roman church, sitting where he does in alleged right of succession to Peter, perpetrates an act of heresy which the apostle, himself, would sooner have laid down his life than have committed! Is not, then, the head of the Roman communion antichrist? Does not the whole church over which he presides participate in his sin? If not; then has Christ issued a command of not a moment's weight! If not; then does the Holy Ghost employ a term which is devoid of meaning! And observe; how the *mark*, differing only in form, runs broad and deep throughout the whole of his officiating subordinates! *Padre*, or *Pere*, or *Father*, is the title of the acting priesthood of Rome. What ought I then to anticipate in prosecuting the enquiry,

which, in humble yet firm reliance upon the help of the Creator, through faith in the atonement and in the merits of Jesus Christ, I have ventured to undertake? What, except to meet with antichrist at every stage of my progress. Shall I be disappointed? Let us see!

THE ROCK OF ROME ;

OR,

THE ARCH HERESY.

SURPRISE at sundry, not very remote, instances of apostacy, both clerical and laic, among Protestants of a certain denomination ; disgust at Puseyism, or Popery, under the mask of Protestantism ; and a desire to look thoroughly into the title of a church, the peculiar tenets of which are acknowledged by a large portion among the inhabitants of the United Kingdom, and are professed by whole nations upon the continent of Europe, as well as embraced, more or less numerous, by man-

kind in other regions of the globe ; have led to the following little treatise.

Convinced that an enquiry, which bears directly upon the word of God, could not be decided otherwise than by referring to that word ; independent of the authority of which, all human speculations upon such a subject must be fallible, or at the best, doubtful ; I have resorted to the Bible for such evidence as, in my judgment, would appear to establish the negative or affirmative of the question, whether the Church of Rome is, what she asserts herself to be, and is most widely acknowledged to be—the true Church of Christ ?

The only human evidence to which I have had recourse, is such as I have met with in treatises, composed by the advocates of that Church ; believing that in such works I could not fail to acquaint

myself with the most powerful arguments that could be adduced in favour of Romanism. I proceed to subject those arguments to the test of Scripture, that I may satisfy myself with regard to their correctness.

The pretensions of the Church of Rome rest upon one dogma—the headship of Peter. If that headship is a fact, those pretensions are valid; if it is a fiction, they are void. I go at once to the foundation, and quote from Challoner's "Catholic Christian Instructed," a disquisition conducted in the form of question and answer. I open the book at Chapter xvi. page 271, where he begins to treat "*of the superiority of Bishops, and the superiority of the Pope;*" and passing over, as being foreign to the matter in hand, the arguments by which he endeavours to prove that, besides priests or presbyters, there has been always in the

Church the order of bishops, superior to that of priests, I quote from page 272, where I read as follows :

“ How do you prove that amongst bishops one should be head, and have a jurisdiction over the rest ? ”

“ Because Christ has so appointed, who gave that pre-eminence to St. Peter, with respect to the rest of the Apostles, as appears from Matt. xvi. 18, 19, when, in reward for his faith and confession of his divinity, he confirmed to him the name of Peter or Rock, and promised him that upon this rock he would build his Church, and the gates of hell should not prevail against it, and that he would give him the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, &c. ; and from John xxi. 15, &c., when our Lord having asked Peter, ‘ Dost thou love me more than these ? ’ three times, committed to him the

charge of all his lambs and sheep, without exception, that is of his whole Church. St. Matt. x. 2, reckoning the names of the Apostles, says : ' The first, Simon, who is called Peter.' Now it does not appear that he could be said to be the first person upon any other account, but by reason of his supremacy ; for that he was first in age is more than appears ; and that he was first in calling is not true, for St. Andrew came to Christ before Peter, and was, probably, the elder brother ; and certain it is that the evangelists in reckoning up the names of the Apostles upon several occasions, neither follow the order of their age, nor of their calling, yet always reckon Peter in the first place ; and sometimes, more clearly to intimate his pre-eminence, name him alone as chief, or prince, as Mark i. 36, ' Simon and they that were with him ;' Luke ix. 32, ' Peter

and they that were with him ;' Acts ii. 14, ' Peter standing up with the eleven ;' Acts v. 29, ' Peter and the Apostles answered and said,' &c.—where the Protestant translation has foisted in the word other Apostles, as clearly seeing that the former expression too clearly expressed St. Peter's being something more than the rest.

" It is also worth observing, that our Lord was pleased to teach the people out of Peter's ship, Luke v. 2 ; that he ordered the same tribute to be paid for himself and Peter, Matt. xvii. 27 ; that he particularly prayed for Peter, that his faith should not fail, and ordered him to confirm or strengthen his brethren, Luke xxii. 32, &c.

" Hence St. Peter's supremacy is acknowledged by the perpetual tradition of the holy fathers. See Origen," &c.

I begin with proof the first, viz. : Matthew xvi. 18, 19 ; and besides those verses, I shall quote the four preceding ones, as they are introductory to them.

“ When Jesus came into the coasts of
“ Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples,
“ saying, ‘ Who do men say that I, the
“ Son of man, am ?’ And they said, ‘ Some
“ say that thou art John the Baptist ;
“ some Elias ; and others Jeremias, or
“ one of the prophets.’ He saith unto
“ them, ‘ But who say ye that I am ?’ and
“ Simon Peter answered and said, ‘ Thou
“ art the Christ the Son of the living
“ God ;’ and Jesus answered and said unto
“ him, ‘ Blessed art thou Simon Bar-
“ jona ; for flesh and blood hath not re-
“ vealed it unto thee ; but my Father,
“ which is in Heaven ; and I say unto
“ thee that thou art Peter, and upon this

“ rock I will build my Church, and the
“ gates of hell shall not prevail against
“ it.’ ”

Now, interpreting this passage according to the assumption of the Church of Rome, namely, that Peter was the Rock—that the Rock and Peter were intended by our Saviour to be regarded as identical—does it consist with common sense to believe that a declaration so peculiar, so infinitely honorable to Peter, and at the same time of importance so vital to the Church, should have been passed over in utter silence by the other evangelists, Mark, Luke, and John ; and should not have been alluded to in even the remotest degree, throughout the whole of the Acts, the Epistles, and Revelations ? It is true that certain incidents in our Saviour’s life, after he entered upon his

ministry, are recorded only *once*, as the raising of Lazarus ; but that, though a very peculiar one, is only a single proof among many of the Godhead residing in the flesh. Not a thousandth part of what the Saviour taught and did, has been handed down to us ; and from other reasons beside the obvious one advanced by John, namely, that had the case been otherwise, “ even the world itself could not “ contain the books that should be written ;” an hyperbolical, but still most appropriate mode of expression ; so that it is reasonable to assert that the gospels had been complete, as far as efficiency is considered, had the majority of the incidents, addresses, and dialogues, which they record, been suppressed and others substituted. A minute description of what occurred in a single evening, might have occupied

as many chapters as the Book of Matthew is composed of, not to instance days and weeks and months, the entire transactions of which are alluded to in only two or three words, or are passed over in perfect silence.

Let us take a cursory view of the Gospel by this Evangelist. In the seventeenth verse of the fourth chapter, we read, “ From this
“ time Jesus began to preach, and to say,
“ ‘ Repent for the kingdom of Heaven is at
“ hand.’ ” Thus briefly is the commencement of his ministry alluded to. In the twenty-third, twenty-fourth, and last verses, we read: “ And Jesus went about all Galilee,
“ teaching in their synagogues, and preach-
“ ing the gospel of the kingdom, and heal-
“ ing all manner of sickness and all man-
“ ner of disease among the people. And
“ his fame went throughout all Syria, and

“ they brought unto him all sick people,
“ that were taken with divers diseases and
“ torments, and those which were pos-
“ sessed with devils, and those which were
“ lunatic, and those which had the palsy,
“ and he healed them. And there followed
“ him great multitudes of people from
“ Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from
“ Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from
“ beyond Jordan.” Here a series of labours, a minute, circumstantial detail of which might have furnished matter for a whole volume, is dismissed in a single compound sentence.

In the sixteenth verse of the eighth chapter, we read : “ When the even was
“ come, they brought unto him many
“ that were possessed with devils, and he
“ cast out the spirits with his word, and
“ healed all that were sick.” Here the

performance of divers miracles is recorded with similar brevity.

In the thirty-fifth verse of the tenth chapter, we read : “ And Jesus went about
“ all the cities and villages, teaching in
“ their synagogues, and preaching the
“ gospel of the kingdom, and healing
“ every sickness and every disease among
“ the people.” Here, matters, the particulars of which, if detailed, would have occupied a voluminous report, are recorded in a few words.

In the first verse of the eleventh chapter, we read : “ And it came to pass when
“ Jesus had made an end of commanding
“ his twelve disciples, he departed thence
“ to preach and to teach in their cities.” Here the same brevity is substituted for lengthy detail.

In the fifty-fourth verse of the thirteenth

chapter, we read : “ And when he was
“ come into his own country, he taught
“ them in their synagogues insomuch
“ that they were astonished, and said,
“ ‘ Whence hath this man this wisdom,
“ and these mighty works ? ’ ” Here, in
a passing glance, is presented to us the
ministry of Christ when he comes into his
own country.

In the thirteenth verse of the fourteenth
chapter, after mention is made of the Bap-
tist’s death, we read : “ When Jesus heard
“ of it, he departed thence by ship into a
“ desert place apart ; and when the people
“ heard thereof, they followed him on foot
“ out of the cities ; and Jesus went forth
“ and saw a great multitude, and was
“ moved with compassion toward them,
“ and he healed their sick.” Out of the
numerous miracles which the Saviour per-

formed on this occasion, only one is circumstantially recorded—the feeding of the multitude with five loaves and two fishes.

In the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth verses of the same chapter, after the Saviour comes into the land of Gennesaret, we read : “ And when the men of that place
“ had knowledge of him, they sent into
“ all that country round about, and brought
“ unto him all that were diseased, and besought him that they might only touch
“ the hem of his garment, and as many
“ as touched were made perfectly whole.”
Here transactions which must have occupied a considerable lapse of time, are summed up in a report, the constructing of which could not have occupied more than a few seconds.

In the twenty-ninth verse of the fifteenth chapter, we read that the Saviour draws

nigh unto the sea of Galilee, and goes up into a mountain ; and in the thirtieth and thirty - first verses, it is recorded, that
“ Great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame,
“ blind, dumb, maimed, and many others,
“ and cast them down at Jesus’ feet, and
“ he healed them, insomuch that the multitude wondered when they saw the
“ dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole,
“ the lame to walk, and the blind to see,
“ and they glorified the God of Israel.”
Here but one of the Saviour’s miracles is particularized—the feeding of four thousand men, besides women and children, with only seven loaves and a few little fishes ; while a multitude of miracles equally declarative of his divinity, are alluded to without the instancing of a single example.

In the first and second verses of the nineteenth chapter, we read: "And it
" came to pass that when Jesus had
" finished these sayings, he departed from
" Galilee, and came into the coasts of
" Judea beyond Jordan, and great multi-
" tudes followed him, and he healed them
" there." Here is another instance of
summing up in two or three words, mat-
ters which might have occupied hundreds
of pages, had they been detailed in full.

What hosts of miracles have we here,
only two instances of which are particu-
larized; and what treasures of doctrine
without a single quotation !

Thus it is obviously possible to attach
too much weight to uniformity in the
evidence of the Evangelists, one with ano-
ther. Each might have filled his pages in
the **main**, with a totally different series of

incidents, without vitiating, in the slightest degree, the credibility of the common testimony ; and hence we can account for the fact that only *one* of them should have recorded our Saviour's address to Peter, in the seventh verse, sixteenth chapter of Matthew—but only on the supposition that the rock of which Jesus speaks was the truth which the disciple had just propounded ; namely, *Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God*, the rock, indeed, upon which that Church is built against which “ the gates of hell shall not prevail.” I say that upon this, the orthodox interpretation of the passage under consideration, the silence of every other part of Scripture, with regard to our Saviour's having addressed this declaration to Peter, may be accounted for ; as such was directly or indirectly, the bearing of everything

which Christ taught and did, and is constantly re-iterated in the spirit, though not in the letter. But, supposing the interpretation of the Church of Rome to be the true one—supposing Peter to be the rock upon which the Church was to be built—the oversight is utterly unaccountable ; and not only unaccountable, but reprehensible and unpardonable ; in a word, a gross neglect of an obvious and imperative duty. A solitary peculiar declaration of the most prodigious weight, and consequently requiring the most unquestionable testimony, is suffered to remain without corroboration, direct or indirect, though evangelist after evangelist writes, subsequently to its being propounded, the history of the events in the course of which it occurred ! It took place in the presence of the other disciples. Viewing it accord-

ing to the interpretation of the Church of Rome, it was a new thing ; they had heard nothing like it from the lips of their Master before ; it was a momentous thing ; nothing less than the founding of the Church in the person of one of their number ;—and they pay no heed to it ! nay, by the absence of all allusion to it, attach suspicion to that which it imperatively behoved them to place beyond all doubt. Where is the testimony of James ? of John ? of Jude ? They were present. Where is the record of Mark and Luke ? Their information was collected from the Apostles. Where is the testimony of Paul ? He who was specially nominated to the Gentile Apostleship, must needs have been thoroughly instructed as to the features or economy of the Church, in the building of which he was to become so eminently in-

strumental ? Where is the testimony of Peter himself ? He utters no single word which can be construed as bearing reference to the point in question ! The Church begins to be constructed, and the progress of the work, during a period of upwards of thirty years, is carefully narrated, yet is there not any allusion whatsoever to the *Rock of Rome* ! Epistles are written wherein the foundation of the Church is described. We find Christ in that foundation ; we find the Apostles in that foundation ; but we look in vain for Peter, except inasmuch as we know that he is included in the number of the latter. What says Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, third chapter, tenth and eleventh verses : “ According to the grace of God, which is given to me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another

“ buildeth thereon ; but let every man
“ take heed how he buildeth thereon ; for
“ other foundation can no man lay than
“ that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” This
is the interpretation of the verse in the
eighteenth chapter of Matthew ! This is
the Rock !—but not the rock of *Rome*.

What says he again in his epistle to the
Ephesians, second chapter, nineteenth and
twentieth verses : “ Now then ye are no
“ more strangers and foreigners, but fel-
“ low citizens with the saints, and of the
“ household of God ; and are built upon
“ the foundation of the apostles and pro-
“ phets, Jesus Christ himself being the
“ chief corner stone.” Here again we
find Christ and the apostles, but no men-
tion of Peter, except as we may under-
stand him to be included in the apostles.
Christ is here denominated the corner

stone ; whereas, in the former instance, Paul calls him the foundation. Of course ! Christ is the foundation as well as the corner stone. You find him in the apostles, else they have no business in the foundation. You find him everywhere in his true Church. So it is that he calls himself at the same time the shepherd and the door. He is all in all ! Amen.

The perfect silence of every other part of Scripture, as regards that passage in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew, in which Rome endeavours to establish her anti-christian doctrine of the headship of Peter, is conclusively striking, when we examine the Gospels of Mark and Luke, both of whom omit the least mention of the Saviour's address to this apostle, in their account of the incident which gave rise to that address. Thus, writes Mark, begin-

ning at the twenty-seventh verse of the eighth chapter :

“ And Jesus went out and his disciples,
“ into the towns of Cæsarea Philippi, and
“ by the way he asked his disciples, say-
“ ing unto them, ‘ Who do men say
“ that I am ?’ And they answered, ‘ John
“ the Baptist ; but some say Elias, and
“ others, one of the prophets.’ And he
“ saith unto them, ‘ But who say ye that
“ I am ?’ And Peter answered and saith
“ unto him, ‘ Thou art the Christ.’ ”

Here, as in Matthew, ought to follow the reply of Jesus :

“ Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona ;
“ for flesh and blood hath not revealed it
“ unto thee, but my Father which is in
“ Heaven ; and I say unto thee that thou
“ art Peter, and upon this rock I will build

“ my Church, and the gates of hell shall
“ not prevail against it.”

Not a word of this do we find in Mark ;
but what then ? Does the grand argument
which it conveys sustain thereby the small-
est detriment ? No ! We have the Church,
and the rock upon which the Church is
to be built, in the disciple’s declaration, and
in the Saviour’s acceptance of that decla-
ration. Mark at once proceeds :

“ And he charged them that they should
“ tell no man of him. And he began to
“ teach them that the Son of man must
“ suffer many things ; and be rejected of
“ the elders and of the chief priests and
“ scribes, and be killed ; and after three
“ days, rise again.”

The argument of paramount importance
in Matthew’s relation, is *virtually* present
in that of Mark. What is absent ? Only

the confirming, to Simon, of the name which Jesus had promised to him in their first interview, as recorded by John. Now he receives for the first time the name of Peter—a matter of inferior moment; one proof among hosts of *the foreknowledge of Jesus*, of the Godhead residing in the flesh;—a matter the inserting or the omitting of which, neither weakens nor strengthens the general testimony with regard to Jesus. Jesus being the Christ, the Church is ascertained, and its stability, notwithstanding all the assaults of hell, is established.

What is Luke's account? Thus writes the Evangelist, beginning at the eighteenth verse of the ninth chapter.

“ And it came to pass as he was alone,
“ praying, his disciples were with him ;
“ and he asked them, saying: ‘ Who do

“ men say that I am ?’ They answering,
“ said : ‘ John the Baptist, but some Elias,
“ and others say that one of the old pro-
“ phets is risen again.’ He said unto
“ them. ‘ But who say ye that I am ?’
“ Peter answering, said, ‘ The Christ of
“ God.’ ”

Here again, as in Matthew, ought to follow the address to Peter, but it is totally passed over, while the grand argument is preserved, in the Saviour’s acceptance of the Apostle’s declaration ; in which declaration we find the rock, and the Church which is to be built upon it, and which is to triumph over all the malice of hell. The Evangelist makes no allusion whatsoever to the surname which Simon received upon this occasion ; but proceeds at once to the reply of Jesus.

“ And he straightly charged them, and

“ commanded them to tell no man that
“ thing ; saying, ‘ the Son of man must
“ suffer many things, and be rejected
“ of the elders and chief priests and
“ scribes, and be slain, and raised again
“ the third day.’ ”

Without taking into consideration various other instances in which Scripture denounces the peculiar tenets of Rome ; does not this solitary one afford a sufficiently cogent reason for her policy, in endeavouring to keep the Bible to herself ? in endeavouring to preserve it as a sealed book, with regard to the flock ? The versions of Mark and Luke are conclusively fatal to the interpretation which the holy see and her dependencies attach to that of Matthew. Not an inch of ground do the former afford for confirming that interpre-

tation. They lead but to one inevitable conclusion ; namely, that the arch dogma of Rome is an arch fraud—an imposture which owes its currency to the suppression of the Bible, and the substitution of the Missal—the invention of men superseding the revelation of God ! an imposture which would have been strangled in the birth, or at least cramped in the growth, had the volume of truth been as widely accessible as learning and the art of printing have subsequently made it. And, now that so momentous an end has been attained, to what are we to ascribe the countenance which the heresy receives at the hands of millions of professing Christians ? To what, but the tendency of mankind to cling to the error in which they have been nurtured and brought up ; to tread in the footsteps of their fathers ; to

go with the crowd ; to escape the labour of thinking for themselves—especially when encouraged to implicit obedience by the specious and crafty dogma of an infallible authority to teach on the part of those who are accustomed to direct them. In vain you tell the Roman Catholic, upon the authority of Scripture, that all doctrine is void, except such as is clearly founded upon the word of God ; in vain you quote text after text, in order to convince him that fiction has been palmed upon him for truth. He rejects the written testimony, and clasping the dogma of a feigned oral tradition, invented for the pampering of the worst of human lusts—pride, pomp, riches, domination—turns his back upon Christ, and falls at the feet of the alleged successor of Peter, in spite of the Apostle himself ;

for the absence of all vicegerentship, or princeship, or headship, on the part of whom, with relation to the rest of the chosen brotherhood, we are provided with no less authentic a testimony than the warrant of his own hand !

And, to conclude this portion of my subject, what is the testimony which, in their enumeration of the disciples, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, bear to the pretended headship of Peter ? To what does that testimony amount ? To nothing, but that he was the first in order upon the list, “ Simon, who is called Peter,” and “ Simon he surnamed Peter,” “ Simon whom also he named Peter.” Why does not Peter in these three several instances, receive all the honours that the Church of Rome assigns to him ? Why are we presented with only the solitary one of his

surname? Matthew, according to Rome, had already established his headship as the rock upon which the Church was to be built. Why does he not confirm that dignity to him here, by naming him as the chief, or prince of the apostles, instead of contenting himself with merely inserting his surname? Why is a matter comparatively so slight attended to, while one of the most momentous nature is totally overlooked? But Mark and Luke, having thrown the most point-blank discredit upon the dogma of Rome, by wholly omitting any notice of that text in Matthew, upon which that dogma is founded, are wholly without excuse, if Rome is in the right. If they knew that Peter was the first in dignity, in authority, among the apostles, the actual pastor—the actual prince of the apostles, the fundamental

rock of the Church ; why do they commit so manifest a breach of common justice, of common courtesy towards him, as to content themselves with assigning to him no higher place than that of the first in simple order of enumeration ? Why do they record the mere name which he had received from the Saviour, and omit the paramount fact of his alleged superior office ? It cannot be contended that the office was *implied* in the name, while it is absent in every other particular.

We come to the next argument or proof, derived from Matthew, in support of Peter's pre-eminence. " And I will give thee the keys of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven." Now, as the power of bind-

ing and loosing is obviously the result of possessing the keys ; and as that power is promised to all the apostles indiscriminately, according to the eighteenth chapter, eighteenth verse of Matthew : “ Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven ;” as well as the twentieth chapter, twenty - third verse of John : “ Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained ”— loosing and binding being the same with remitting and retaining of sins— it inevitably follows that the promise of the keys, though addressed to Peter, was meant as well for all the rest of the apostles ; and consequently that Peter’s peculiar voca-

tion in this particular is not only unsupported, but absolutely *disproved*. The keys could only mean the gospel, or the Holy Ghost, which is the power of the gospel, and with which the apostles were all equally endowed by the Saviour, after his resurrection, as we read in the twentieth chapter, twenty-second and twenty-third verses of John : “ And when he had
“ said this, he breathed upon them, and
“ saith unto them, ‘ Receive ye the Holy
“ Ghost, whosoever sins ye remit they are
“ remitted unto them, and whosoever
“ sins ye retain they are retained.’ ” What becomes of the peculiar vocation of Peter ? If we cannot discover *here* his superiority over the rest of the disciples, where is it to be found ? In Matthew ? No !

The way in which Doctor Wiseman endeavours to evade the fatal effect of this

conclusive evidence, affords a fair specimen of the whole of his laboured work upon the principal doctrines and practices of the Catholic Church. “*I will acknowledge, my brethren,*” he writes, “*that this argument, at first sight, has some appearance of strength, and I am not surprised when I see many Protestant commentators ground their rejection of the supremacy of Peter, almost exclusively upon this reasoning. It would be easy indeed, to elude its force.*”—Nothing is difficult with the very reverend Doctor, except to execute what he undertakes—“*but I wish to convert it into an argument in my favour.*” The reverend Doctor not only disarms his adversary, but subdues him with his own weapon! A formidable antagonist. “*Listen therefore, I pray you with attention. Peter it is said had no pre-eminence of jurisdiction bestowed*

upon him, because he received no power or commission individually, which was not on another occasion collectively bestowed upon the twelve. Now is this the way in which you reason upon any other similar case in Scripture, or is it not diametrically opposite? Let us try a few instances.”—Now for the other “ similar ” cases !—“ Our blessed Saviour constantly inculcated to all his disciples the necessity of following him only, ‘ he who followeth, walketh not in darkness,’ all must ‘ take up their cross and follow him ;’ ‘ all his sheep must know his voice and follow the shepherd.’ When therefore, he addressed to Peter and Andrew, to Matthew and the sons of Zebedee, the very same invitation, ‘ Follow me,’ did it ever occur to you to reason, that because the very same invitation was repeated on other occasions to all the Jews in common with themselves,

therefore they were not meant to follow Jesus in a distinct and more peculiar manner ? Again ; Our blessed Redeemer is repeatedly said to have tenderly loved all his apostles ; he called them not servants but friends. Yea, no one could have greater love for another than he manifested to them, by laying down his life for them. When, therefore, John is by himself simply called the beloved disciple, as all the other disciples are said to have been beloved, did you ever think of arguing that as no more is predicated of him singly in one instance, than is of all the twelve in others, therefore the love of Jesus for John was nothing distinctive and pre-eminent ? Once more ; To all the apostles was given a commission to teach all nations, to preach the gospel to every creature, beginning with Jerusalem and Samaria, unto the uttermost bounds of

the earth. When, therefore, the spirit of God told them to separate Saul and Barnabas for the ministry of the Gentiles, or when Paul individually calls himself their apostle, did you ever think of concluding that, as this individual commission was included and comprehended in the general one given to all, therefore Paul was never invested with any personal mission, received no more here than the other apostles, and only groundlessly arrogated to himself the apostleship of the Gentiles as his peculiar office? If in all these instances you would not allow such conclusions, how can they be admitted in the case of Peter? How are his special powers alone to be invalidated by those which he received in common with the rest?"

This the very reverend disputant calls argument! Look at it.

The calling of Peter, Andrew, Matthew, and the sons of Zebedee, became peculiar the moment they were enrolled amongst the twelve, in whose vocation *none among the rest of the discipleship participated.*

The designation of the beloved disciple was peculiar to John. *No other one of the apostles ever received such a title.*

The Gentile apostleship was peculiar to Paul. *No one of the twelve was specifically appointed to that portion of the general work.*

The power to bind and loose was *not* peculiarly given to Peter, *because the same power was subsequently conferred upon the rest of the twelve.*

Where is there even an approach to a parallel between the last instance and the three preceding ones? And mark the begging of the question in the phrase "his

special powers ;” special nonsense ! If I am the proprietor of a garden, and choose to give, first, to one neighbour, and subsequently to another, the right of entrance ; in what respect does that right become special with reference to the former ? The right is common to both. Precedence makes no difference, except with regard to the time for which the privilege has been enjoyed. In every other respect, the two are precisely upon the same footing. Our Saviour did not argue thus in the parable of the labourers hired at different hours ; though, there, a ground of distinction is naturally, though erroneously, urged. Dr. Wiseman reckons largely on his infallible authority to teach, when he broaches such absurdity, and thinks to pass it off for logic ! The only apparent difference between our Saviour’s promise to Peter and

that which he addressed to the twelve collectively, consists in the mention of the keys in the former instance ; but “the keys,” or the gospel, being the only possible means of binding and loosing, the bestowal of them must be considered as implied in the latter instance, otherwise the promise had been *nugatory*.

But Peter’s pre-eminence—says the advocate for Rome—is evident from the twenty-first chapter, fifteenth verse, of John. “ *When our Lord, having asked Peter, ‘ Dost thou love me more than these ?’ three times committed to him the charge of all his lambs and sheep, without exception—that is, of his whole Church.*” Thus error, in its zeal, betrays itself. To establish what is false, it does not scruple to go beyond the spirit and even the letter. There are two misstatements here. The question,

“ Dost thou love me more than these ? ” occurs only once in the passage of Scripture referred to ; while that passage is totally destitute of any term which justifies in the slightest degree, the inference that the charge of *all* the Saviour’s lambs and sheep, *without exception*, was designed to be committed to Peter. And, further, the passage absolutely tells to Peter’s discredit instead of redounding to his honour.

Thus, writes John : “ So when they
“ had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter,
“ ‘ Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me
“ more than these ? ’ ” — the rest of the
apostles : — “ He saith unto him ‘ yea, Lord,
“ thou knowest that I love thee.’ He
“ saith unto him, ‘ Feed my lambs.’ He
“ saith to him again the second time,
“ ‘ Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me ? ’
“ He saith unto him, ‘ yea, Lord, thou

“ knowest that I love thee.’ He saith
“ unto him, ‘ Feed my sheep.’ He saith
“ unto him the third time, ‘ Simon, son of
“ Jonas, lovest thou me?’ Peter was grieved
“ because he said unto him the third time,
“ ‘ Lovest thou me?’ and he said unto
“ him, ‘ Lord thou knowest all things ;
“ thou knowest that I love thee.’ Jesus
“ saith unto him, ‘ Feed my sheep.’ ”

Now Peter, here, stands obviously in the position of a man who is rebuked and admonished, and not in that of one who is applauded and exalted.

Thrice had Peter denied his Lord—the second and third time, with cursing and swearing, adding blasphemy to falsehood ; and *thrice* the Saviour asks him if he loves him, though, in the second and third instance, he compassionately varies the terms

of the first question ; “ Lovest thou me
“ more than these.”

What were the terms of Peter’s boast, previously to his Lord’s betrayal by Judas Iscariot? According to Matthew: “ Though
“ all men should be offended because of
“ thee, yet will I never be offended.” According to Mark : “ Although all should
“ be offended yet will not I.” Note, in the Saviour’s first question, the obvious, pointed reference to Peter’s vaunt of superior love to his master, “ Lovest thou me more than
“ these.” Note Peter’s reply to that question ; the retractation, the contrition, which it breathes, “ Yea, Lord.” What ! that he loves his Lord more than these, when with shame and remorse, to the very shedding of tears, he has found himself in the same predicament with his brethren, *but with aggravation ?* No ! The affir-

mation contained in the response establishes only a portion of the question ! He simply says : “ Thou knowest that I love thee ;” but he does not add “ more than these,” neither dares he allow the simple affirmative “ yea,” to stand alone, but immediately follows it up with a qualification, *lest it should appear to countenance the question of his Lord in all its terms.* Peter understands that question in a different sense from that which the advocate of Rome attaches to it ; and he shews that he does so. Peter here, unmistakably, though indirectly, acknowledges his previous sin of self-reliance—of presumption ; and the Saviour knowing it to be the case, and accepting the act of contrition, mercifully forbears ; and, when next he interrogates him, drops the reproachful comparison. “ Lovest thou me ?” are simply the

terms of the second question ; and that question he repeats ; and, each time that Peter replies, enjoins him to feed his lambs or sheep. Why ? To denote to him as well as to his brethren, that “ he commits to “ him the charge of *all* his lambs and sheep “ *without exception ; that is of his whole “ Church ?*” Assuredly not, after having said to them : “ One is your master, even “ Christ, and all ye are brethren.” Assuredly not, after having not once, but repeatedly, charged them to abstain from lusting after lordship or authority over one another. Assuredly not, after having denounced the uppermost room, the chief seat, the deferential salutation, the title of “ Rabbi,” “ Rabbi,” as utterly inconsistent with the character of their brotherhood, and the spiritual nature of their calling ! No ; but with a totally opposite intent. To

confirm the weakest of his disciples, a man liable to err, from innate vanity, and from a deficiency of moral courage; prone to be a respecter of persons; ambitious too. Of none of his disciples, after Judas, did the Saviour entertain the same mistrust; and accordingly none of them was he so anxious to impress with a sense of his responsibility. Thrice he questions and thrice he charges him—as Peter thrice denied his Lord—and Peter at last is grieved. Why? At the unparalleled honour that his Lord was conferring upon him by committing to him “the care of *all* his lambs “and sheep, *without exception* ;” his brethren of course, among the flock? Impossible! His previous lamentable fall denounces such a conclusion. Peter, here, stood before his master as a culprit, reproached, but spared; and not as the

chief or prince of the apostles. He himself did not entertain the most remote conception that such a dignity was, or had ever been, intended for him. His Lord's doctrines, his Lord's commands, his Lord's example, thoroughly guarded him from falling into so preposterous an error ; though his self-styled successors, century after century, have endeavoured to foist the odious heresy upon him.

John writes : " Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, " ' Lovest thou me ? ' " but the pain attributed to Peter must not, cannot, be restricted to that question. The repetition of the injunction that accompanies it, or follows immediately upon Peter's reply to it, was equally galling. If, in the former instance, his attachment to his master is questioned ; in the latter, his fidelity is the

subject of challenge. The injunction is a condition *dependent* upon Peter's answer to the ~~question~~. The question and it *go together*; You cannot separate them. They are dictated in the same spirit in the anxiety of the Saviour for the welfare of his fold, and consequently for the fidelity of that particular individual among his shepherds, who, next to Judas, though infinitely less guilty, had been convicted of the greatest swerving. All the apostles were offended because of their Lord. As their Lord had predicted, they had deserted him when he was led, a prisoner, from the garden of Gethsemane. Each one of them had denied that in his particular case the warning of the Saviour—"All ye
"shall be offended because of me this
"night"—would be made good; but none of them so confidently as Peter. And his

self-reliance endures even when he must be conscious that his allegiance to his Lord is giving way ! Where do we find him when the Saviour is in the hands of his enemies ? At his side ? No ! Near him ? No. He follows him *at a distance*. Matthew, twenty-sixth chapter, fifty-eighth verse : “ But Peter followed him afar off, “ into the high priest’s palace.” Mark, fourteenth chapter, fifty - fourth verse : “ And Peter followed him afar off, even “ into the palace of the high priest.” Luke, twenty-second chapter, fifty-fourth verse : “ And Peter followed afar off.” And when he enters the high priest’s palace, what does he ? Rejoin his Lord ? Press up to him that he may support him as he stands before Caiaphas, and the assembly of priests and elders ? No ; he shrinks from so close a vicinity to danger,

and bears out his boast, by sitting with the servants, and warming himself at the fire, while he "waits to see the end." Still is he confident? He has *followed* his Lord, though "afar off," into the palace of the high priest; and he remains in the palace, though he ventures no farther than the hall! He has not fled, like all the other disciples, *excepting John*. Better if he had! From what a prostration of all character had it saved him. Thrice is he questioned, and not officially, as to his being an associate of the Redeemer, and thrice he adds deliberate falsehood to defection, enforcing the lie, at last, with cursing and swearing. The motives of our Lord in questioning Peter thrice, and in charging him as many times to feed his sheep and lambs, stand in intimate, inseparable connexion with one another, as

well as with the Apostle's fall ; and, excepting the pardon and reconciliation of which they are the seal, present anything but a ground of self-congratulation to Peter, or a challenge for our admiration of him.

The fact that Peter was the first of the Apostles to whom our Lord appeared after his resurrection, is appealed to by Roman Catholics in proof of Peter's headship ; but that fact is only another instance of the Saviour's tender anxiety for the conversion of his weak and erring servant. And it is worthy of remark, that the very last words which Christ addresses to Peter, individually, convey unmistakeable reproof ; while they throw a light the very reverse of favourable upon the character of the Apostle. This takes place almost immediately after the charge to feed the

lambs and sheep ; whence the Saviour proceeds directly to foretel the violent end of Peter. “ Then Peter, turning about, “ seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following ; which also leaned on his breast “ at supper and said, ‘ Lord, which is he “ that betrayeth thee ? ’ Peter, seeing him, “ saith to Jesus, ‘ Lord, and what shall “ this man do ? ’ ” Peter envied the loved disciple ; and the Saviour thus rebukes the question, which he knows to be put in the spirit of jealousy, “ If I will that he “ tarry till I come, what is that to thee ? ” The passage will not admit of any other interpretation.

ANDREW NOT CALLED BEFORE PETER.

The advocate for Rome proceeds next to prove the headship of Peter, from the precedence which is given him by the

Evangelists, wheresoever he is introduced in conjunction with the rest of the disciples, or with any portion of them ; and sets out with combating the opinion that such precedence may be ascribed to the circumstance of his having been the first that was called ; inasmuch as that honour belonged of right to his brother, "*for St. Andrew came to Christ before Peter.*" This is true, according to John ; but the question, as to which of the brothers was the first *called*, remains to be settled, notwithstanding the fact that the point is generally conceded in favour of Andrew.

Now the evidence of Scripture is, beyond all controversy, in favour of the belief that Peter, and not Andrew, was the first whom the Saviour *called*. Matthew, Mark, and Luke attest it ; and John by no means *denies* it. Matthew says, in the fourth

chapter, eighteenth verse of his gospel,
“ And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon, called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers ; and he saith unto them, ‘ Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men ;’ and they straightway left their nets, and followed him.” Mark says, in the first chapter, sixteenth verse of his gospel,
“ Now, as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers ; and Jesus said unto them, “ ‘ Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men ;’ and straightway they forsook their nets and followed him.” Luke says, in the fifth chapter, tenth verse of his gospel, after having mentioned our Saviour’s preaching from

Simon's ship, the miraculous draught of fishes, and Simon's dread thereof : " And
" Jesus said unto Simon, ' Fear not, from
" henceforth thou shalt catch men.' "

These several statements, especially the last one, are too circumstantial to justify the assertion that Andrew was the first whom Jesus *called*. Now the fact that Andrew was the first that *came* to Jesus, as related by John, in the first chapter and fortieth verse of his gospel, ought not by any means to be regarded as a contradiction of what is asserted by the other evangelists : because Andrew's *coming* was one thing, and his *calling* another ; and, consequently, might have taken place at different periods ; so that Peter might have been the first that was *called*, though he was not the first that came ; and the

weight of evidence lies altogether on the side of his having been so.

When Andrew and the other disciple of the Baptist inquire of the Saviour where he dwells, the Saviour simply says, "Come and see." This cannot be construed as the *call* of Andrew, or if so, the *other* disciple who accompanied him, and to whom as well as Andrew the invitation was addressed, *must necessarily be taken into the account*. And it is further related, "They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour." Observe; the time of day is given as the reason of their abiding with the Saviour, and not his calling them. Assuredly, as far as the text throws any light upon the question, no call had as yet been given. And what is the information that Andrew gives to Peter, when he seeks

him subsequently to this occurrence ? Simply, “ We have found the Messiah.” Now *finding* the Messiah was a matter of infinitely less importance to Andrew than being *called* by the Messiah ; and where is the evidence of the latter, here ? What is the inference here, *but that Andrew had not yet been called*. While he communicated the news that was less momentous as related to himself, would he suppress that which was of the very first moment ? Upon every ground of human nature, would not both have burst from his lips together—if indeed the fact of more vital interest to Andrew—his being called by Jesus to follow him—had not taken precedence ? What then is the obvious, inevitable conclusion, but that this fact was not yet in existence ? Neither is Peter called when his brother conducts him to

the Messiah. Our Saviour, upon seeing him, simply says, "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona. Thou shalt be called Cephaz." Neither of them is called as yet. There is not any evidence here, direct or indirect, of any such transaction; nay, the proof is all on the other side, and denies unequivocally that any such transaction then took place. The calling of both was, beyond all question, an occurrence subsequent to this; and must be dated from the period when the Saviour, having performed the miracle of the multitudinous draught of fishes, as a proof of his being the Messiah, proceeded to form the association of his peculiar disciples, beginning with Peter. Upon Peter's throwing himself upon his knees, and exclaiming, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord"—*could Peter have been*

called when he thus addressed the Messias? Impossible! The account of Luke alone must settle the question as to Peter's priority in point of calling. Its very minuteness commands belief; though all mention of Andrew is omitted, doubtless from the prominent share which his brother took in the transaction. That he was present is unquestionable, from the evidence of Matthew and Mark; and, independently of their testimony, appears from the use of the plural pronoun in Luke's account: "And when *they* had
" done this, *they* inclosed a great number
" of fishes, and *their* net brake; and *they*
" beckoned unto *their* partners, which were
" in the other ship, that they should come
" and help *them*." It must have been Andrew that was with Peter. It could not have been a servant, else Luke as-

surely would not have called James and John *their partners*. And as regards the age of the two brothers—a circumstance respecting which the advocate for Rome says, “*for that he*” (Peter) “*was first in age is more than appears*”—the juniority of Andrew may be established from the text: “And he entered into one of the “ships, which was Simon’s!” The elder brother would naturally take precedence in naming the propriety of the ship.

Hence we feel ourselves thoroughly authorized in affirming that Peter was the first called, which circumstance alone may account for his being given the lead whenever he is mentioned along with the other disciples ; as well as for his taking it upon certain occasions, such as when he addresses his brethren, or acts as their mouth-piece.

But the precedence which is given to the name of Peter, in the several histories of the Evangelists, may be accounted for, independently of the priority of his call, by merely considering his *character* ; as that character may be gathered from his actions.

Had Peter been the last of the Apostles, in respect of the order in which they were called, it is not improbable that his name would have stood where it does in the sacred writings. Wheresoever several persons are accustomed to meet, and act together, constantly or periodically, one of the number will invariably be observed to take the lead ; and this without mastery or authority, either acknowledged or claimed. He will influence the rest, without commanding them. He will act for the rest ; yet not of his own independent

option, but by their sufferance. He will be preferred ; and yet the humblest individual in the body will count, in the abstract, for as much as he. In his absolute rank, he will rate as a common member of the whole fraternity. His leadership will be a boon, and not a right. It will be the result of some peculiar faculty on his part, or of a combination of such faculties. He possesses more tact, or more zeal, or more ambition, or more confidence, than any of the rest. He may not, of necessity, be the most deserving. Others may excel him in modesty, consistency, devotion, disinterestedness, virtue ; yet will all give place to him, because he aspires to take the lead, and has the address to do so. And he takes it ; but by allowance. It is his by the consent or sufferance of his fellows ; each one of whom, never-

theless, esteems himself as his equal. He resembles no Pope, or Cardinal, or Archbishop, or Bishop, or Vicar-General, or any thing else in the scale of Romish dignities. Though he rules, he is no master. Let him but once betray that he regards himself as such ; and that moment he finds himself in the common rank. Thus, though the priority of Peter's call were set aside, the precedence which is given to him may be naturally accounted for.

PETER'S CHARACTER, AS INFERRED FROM
HIS HISTORY.

Peter was zealous, but vain ; sincere, but a respecter of persons ; forward, but deficient in moral courage—except where there existed a *necessity* of braving danger. He was a man of superior natural capacity. He was affectionate, but ambitious.

PETER WALKS THE SEA.

When Christ walks upon the sea, Peter emulates the act ; he is desirous that the same miracles should be performed in his own person ; he waits but for the Saviour's command, to put to the proof his faith in the power of the Saviour. " Lord, if it be thou," he exclaims, " bid me come unto thee on the water." Christ complies ; at once to answer the challenge upon his own power, and to rebuke the presumption or the tempting of his disciple. " Come!" is his reply. Peter also walks upon the sea. But his triumph is brief. His self-glorying ends in his disgrace. His natural weakness betrays him ; the boisterous wind affrights him, even in the very presence of his Master ; and in the very act of experiencing the super-human power

of that Master ! Even when he finds the water beneath his feet to have become as stable as the land, he fears and begins to sink. “ Lord, save me ! ” is now his appeal to him who, though not visibly, was actually supporting him the moment before ! “ O thou of little faith,” exclaims his Lord, “ wherefore didst thou doubt ? ” Similar was the Saviour’s address to his disciples upon a previous occasion, when they awakened him in a tempest ; but he had not warned them of the tempest. They had received no assurance of its impotency, and their ship was then “ covered “ with the waves.” Peter doubts when he is actually walking on the sea ! With the positive evidence that his Lord is upholding him, he cowers before the boisterous wind ! Fit rock for Rome to build her Church upon, and well has the fabric

borne testimony to the solidity of the foundation !

PETER CONFESSES CHRIST.

“ Who do men say that I am ? ” inquires the Saviour of his disciples in the seventeenth chapter of Matthew. They reply, “ Some say that thou art John the Baptist, “ and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets.” “ But,” adds our Lord, “ who “ do you say that I am ? ” Peter answers, “ Thou art the Christ, the son of the living “ God.” “ Blessed art thou, Simon Bar- “ jona ! ” says the Saviour ; but, lest the self-love of his too confident disciple should glory, he prevents him at once from taking to himself the merit of having discovered the truth to which he has just given utterance, and adds, “ for flesh and blood hath “ not revealed it unto thee, but my Father

“ which is in Heaven.” Peter must give the glory to God. He is blessed only in the grace which prompted his reply.

PETER RESISTS CHRIST.

But what says Matthew in the very same chapter, twenty-first, twenty-second, and twenty-third verses. Here we contemplate the Saviour’s estimation of the rock upon which Rome has erected her church. “ From that time forth began “ Jesus to show unto his disciples, how he “ must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many “ things of the elders, and chief priests, “ and scribes ; and be killed and raised “ again the third day. Then Peter took “ him, and began to rebuke him, saying, “ ‘ Be it far from thee, Lord ! This shall “ not be unto thee !’ But he turned, and “ said unto Peter, ‘ Get thee behind me,

“Satan ! Thou art an offence unto me,
“for thou savourest not the things that be
“of God, but those that be of men.”

Here Peter must distinguish himself among his brethren again ; but he does so to his utter confusion. With presumptuous zeal he dares to gainsay the prophetic declaration of the Saviour, and what is the result ? The rock of Rome is at once transformed into Satan. The previous image of soundness, solidity, and stability vanishes ; and that of the father of lies appears in its stead ! Why ? Because Peter “ savours
“not the things that be of God, but those
“that be of men.” If before he was inspired by the Spirit, he is now prompted by the Flesh.

Commentators observe, that in consequence of Peter’s share in the drawing up of Mark’s gospel, many things honourable

to Peter are omitted. This opinion by no means explains the silence of the Evangelist, provided we take the same view of the sixteenth chapter, eighteenth verse, of Matthew that the Church of Rome does—namely, that Peter is the rock. To cause the suppression of a circumstance merely honourable to himself, would be an act of amiable modesty on the part of Peter : but to be instrumental to the withholding of a matter so vitally momentous as the foundation of his Master's church—a subject respecting which there should be suffered to exist no doubt ; which was to affect the eternal interests of mankind to the end of time ; and which ought, consequently, to be placed beyond the remotest risk of cavil or misrepresentation—to do this would be a heinous sin ; a dereliction of duty the most culpable ; and

the more especially so, as the condition which the Church of Rome assumes it to enjoin, would form the only exception to that perfect equality, or thorough absence of mastership among his apostles, which our Lord so repeatedly, so distinctly, and so authoritatively enjoins. Neither was Peter the man to suppress, or cause to be suppressed, the publication of so distinguishing, so pre-eminent, so extraordinary a mark of his Master's favour and approbation.

Now, that the truth which Peter propounded, and not Peter himself, was the Rock which ~~the~~ Redeemer meant, is borne out by numerous passages in the New Testament. It may be said to be echoed in almost every page, while it is itself but an echo of a multitude of texts in the old dispensation: whereas, the interpretation

of the Church of Rome being adopted, the assertion stands alone ; is wholly without support ; receives corroboration from no single sentence or phrase elsewhere throughout the whole word of God ; is a solecism in spirit ; an anomaly ; an exception, not confirming but destroying the rule ; a thing that could not occur in infallible inspiration. No evangelist repeats the Saviour's address to Peter. Why ? Because it does not announce any new doctrine ; but one which, in its spirit, breathes throughout the sacred volume—one which may be styled the beginning, the middle, and the end of Revelation—the one thing needful ; by implication, or directly, foretold by all the prophets, fulfilled in Christ, and borne testimony to, a thousand times, by his apostles and disciples. Though Matthew had wholly

omitted the incident, the New Testament had still been perfect ; but not if we grant that Peter and the Rock were identical, that they meant one and the same thing. In that case a *new* condition of salvation had been promulgated ! Where do we find the evidence of any such condition ? No where, except in the dogmas of the papacy—in the fleshly reading of a church, insatiable in grasping temporalities, expressly, uniformly, and emphatically denounced by the word of God ; and to that end, either corrupting God's word, or wresting it from its natural, legitimate, and obvious interpretation.

PETER'S VIEW OF THE TRANSFIGURATION.

Again takes Peter the lead, on the occasion of our Lord's transfiguration. In the promised Messiah, the Jews at large

expected the advent of a king who would establish in their favour an earthly dominion. The apostles, almost to the last moment of Christ's sojourn upon the earth, entertained the same view, notwithstanding the obviously spiritual character of the kingdom which He uniformly preached ; and Peter was not behind hand in this particular. When he beholds the Redeemer attended by Moses and Elias, he at once believes that the hour for this glorious consummation has arrived ; that forthwith the summons is to sound for the hosts of Israel to gather round their king, when the right arm of the Father shall be revealed in the cause of the Son, that the nations may bow down before Him and the chosen people of God. "To your tents, " O Israel !" rings in Peter's ears, and straightway he proposes that three taber-

nacles shall be built ; one for the Saviour, and one for each of the two prophets, who have descended, as he supposes, in order to witness the signal realization of their holy visions. Mark explains the proposition of Peter by observing that “ he wist “ not what he said.” Luke remarks, that he uttered it “not knowing what he said.” But even in the raving of the madman there is a motive ; and, howsoever overpowering the effect of the heavenly vision, the words of Peter must have proceeded from some definite prompting of his mind ; and if the nature of that prompting was not such as I have felt myself justified in ascribing to it, I know not to what other human motive the language of Peter could possibly have been traceable. Peter loved his Master, but his love for him partook of the flesh. Regarding Jesus as the des-

tined achiever of an unparalleled earthly triumph, he ever holds fast by the privilege with which he is invested through the simple precedence of his call, or through his peculiar address. Of all the Apostles, he keeps closest to the Master, in whose glory he expects to be the first to share. His view of the Saviour's mission was not of a character less earthly than that of any of the rest. But he suffers no rival in his attendance upon Him ; and hence we find him, presently, particularized among his brethren—not of his own seeking, though ; but by the pleasure of his Lord.

PETER PECULIARLY NEEDS THE INTER-
POSITION OF CHRIST.

In the twenty-second chapter, beginning at the thirty-second verse, of Luke, the evangelist writes, “ And the Lord said,

“ ‘ Simon ! Simon ! Behold Satan hath
“ desired to have you, that he may sift you
“ as wheat. But I have prayed for thee,
“ that thy faith fail not ; and when thou
“ art converted, strengthen thy brethren.’ ”

Can any candid person who is acquainted with his Bible, consider the argument of this passage without glancing onwards to the incident of Peter's fall, and without being impressed with the conviction of Peter's peculiar infirmity ? But the advocate for Rome takes a totally different view of the text ; and regards it as redounding to Peter's honour ; and as supplying an additional proof of his headship ! “ *It is also worth observing,*” says he, *that our Lord was pleased to teach the people out of Peter's ship, that he ordered the same tribute to be paid for himself and Peter ; that he particularly prayed for Peter*

that his faith should not fail, and ordered him to confirm or strengthen his brethren."

He makes no allusion to the clause, "and
"when thou art converted."

So then it was to Peter's credit—to Peter's magnifying—to the establishing of Peter's headship—that Peter, beyond all the other apostles, stood in need of his Master's prayers!—not because of the Apostle's greater responsibility as the rock upon which the Church of Christ was to be built, but in consequence of his greater infirmity, which rendered him a fitter instrument for Satan to work upon ; and whom Satan accordingly desired to that end. And this is to be regarded as redounding to Peter's honour, as if a man ought to be admired and applauded in proportion to his need of grace ! Is it not obvious to the simplest understanding, that when the Saviour thus addresses his disciple, He, to whom the

future was the same as the present, had the Mount of Olives and the palace of Caiaphas before him? heard the boast of Peter, that though all men should forsake his Master, yet would not *he* forsake Him? heard the confident repetition of that boast? witnessed the failure of that boast? the aggravation of that failure, in an act of falsehood? the repetition of that act of falsehood, and its reiteration, accompanied with blasphemy? The danger of the Apostle was eminent and at hand. He was within a hair's breadth of a fall, from which he might never have recovered; and the Saviour, compassionating him, prayed for him—for him *alone*! He had no such distrust of the rest. He knew that they would also desert him; but he also knew that their confidence would not lead them to tempt the Lord their God, by seeking

to maintain or establish their fidelity, after his warning them that it would give way. He prayed for Peter *only*—as the advocate for Rome most strangely boasts—prayed for him lest Satan should be suffered to take advantage of that vanity, that forwardness, and that deficiency of moral courage, which were natural to him, and which accordingly rendered him peculiarly assailable by temptation.

The Saviour here concludes with the injunction, “and when thou art converted, “strengthen thy brethren.” That is, when thou art recovered from thy fall, when thou repentest of it, when through my prayers thou shalt be rescued from Satan—as Peter was when his conscience smote him upon the crowing of the cock, and the tears of contrition burst forth—“strengthen “thy brethren.”

Contemplate the unspeakable loveliness of this address ! Not even upon the cross, when the Saviour prays for his murderers, “ Father, forgive them, for they know not “ what they do,” does the Majesty of the God-head, in its infinite love, shine forth more refulgently ! The tender Jesus cleaves to the disciple who already miserably forsakes Him—grieves Him—pierces Him by peculiar defection ! defection involving the sacrifice of veracity—of very reverence for God ! Peter lies. Oblivious of the command, delivered directly from the very lips of Deity, “ Let your communication be “ ‘ Yea,’ ‘ yea,’ ‘ Nay,’ ‘ nay,’ ” he curses and swears. He incurs a loss of character, which, from its magnitude, renders almost venial the swerving of his brethren. “ Strengthen thy brethren ! ” What a lifting up, from what a fall ! Which of

his brethren would dare, after this, to comment upon Peter's surpassing delinquency? to cast it in his teeth? to undervalue him? to show coldness to him? perhaps denounce him as unfit to be received again into the brotherhood? His persevering presumption, and his most disgraceful falling - short, might operate upon their *natural* minds in exciting contempt, if not utter alienation; but his compassionate Master sees the danger, and interposes the most ample protection. "Strengthen thy brethren." How? By co-operating with them in building His church. But there is something further implied, though not what the advocate for Rome would suggest, by the word "*confirm*." His brethren needed no *confirming* at the hands of Peter. *Labour* with thy brethren—assist thy brethren—would have sufficed to

reinstall the Apostle in the select association, when the scattered members of it should have become united again : but the framer of the human heart knew well that *more* was necessary ; that Peter must be raised *far* above the detractive thoughts and feelings which his conduct was calculated to generate in the minds of the rest ; and therefore he employs a term which at the same time that it ensures their reception of Peter, bespeaks their respect for him. “ Strengthen thy brethren ! ” The Saviour passes an eulogium upon the zeal for which Peter was conspicuous, and the natural talents with which he was eminently endowed—both of which must have been productive of an accession of strength in addition to the Apostle’s simple co-operation.

And well did Peter bear out the high es-

timation in which the Saviour held his zeal and his natural capacity. His epistles are perfect—perfect in doctrine, perfect in argument, perfect in eloquence. They are conspicuous for energy, condensation, and perspicuity. The Spirit breathes throughout them. They are brief; but not a doctrine, necessary for salvation, is left unhandled or unenforced. James dilates; but without adding. Does he insist upon works, as well as faith? So does Peter. So indeed do all—some at less, and some at greater, length. Grandeur and simplicity are the characteristics of Peter's writings; and masterly directness. He never diverges to the right or left. He starts, and goes right on till he has done; and he leaves nothing *undone*. His work is complete, even in his first epistle. His second one, as he tells those to whom it is addressed, is rather

an additional proof of his zeal, than a supplying of anything ; and how affectingly faithful is that zeal !—at work, under the knowledge that his martyrdom is impending ! “ Yea, I think it meet,” he writes, “ as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance, knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. Moreover, I will endeavour that ye may be able, after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance.” The disinterestedness that breathes throughout this epistle is lovely ; the charity, holy ; the intelligence, prophetic—*of the Church that fathers itself upon him*—and the calmness, sublime ! It comes upon our spirits, even at the distance of eighteen hundred years, like an

injunction, a warning, and a blessing, from the death-bed of a beloved parent ; so as to move us to very sighs and tears !

PETER RESISTS CHRIST AGAIN.

The next occasion upon which Peter acts a conspicuous part is that of the Saviour's washing the feet of his disciples, as we read in the twentieth chapter of John, fifth and following verses : “ After
“ that he poureth water into a basin, and
“ began to wash the disciples' feet, and to
“ wipe them with a towel. Then cometh
“ he to Simon Peter, and Peter said unto
“ him, ‘ Lord, dost thou wash my feet ?’
“ Jesus answered and said unto him,
“ ‘ What I do thou knowest not now, but
“ thou shalt know hereafter.’ Peter saith
“ unto him, ‘ Thou shalt never wash my

“ feet.’ Jesus answered him, ‘ If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me.’ “ Simon Peter saith unto him, ‘ Not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.’” Here we perceive the very same infirmity which tempted Peter to oppose himself to his Lord, in Matthew, sixteenth chapter, twenty - second verse. One would imagine that the rebuke which he received on that occasion would have prevented him from questioning anything which the Saviour might thereafter say or do ; but the leaven of self-confidence was active still. The example of those who preceded him is lost upon Peter. *They* implicitly submit to the act of gracious condescension. Excessive as it is, it extorts no remark, far less expostulation, from *them*. It is the pleasure of their Lord ! They are like, what they

ought to be, little children in his hands. Whatsoever may be their astonishment, they dutifully overmaster it, keep silence, and submit. But different is the case with Peter, when the Saviour comes to *him*. *He* must display a sense of unworthiness which his brethren did not deem it necessary to manifest ; thus tacitly rebuking those brethren ! He dares to question a proceeding, the meaning of which he does not understand ; though its absolute expediency and propriety might be directly presumed from the character of the person with whom it originated ! “ Lord, dost thou wash my feet ! ” is the expostulatory exclamation of the apostle. Jesus replies, “ What I do thou knowest “ not now, but thou shalt know here- “ after.” This ought to have sufficed for Peter. His Lord persists, and it behoves

him to give way. But he is the same Peter that was not satisfied with once contradicting his Lord, when that Lord declared that all his disciples would desert him. In his presumption he proceeds from expostulation to positive resistance. "Thou shalt never wash my feet" is now the exclamation of the Apostle. His Lord here silences him with the threat of utter repudiation. "If I wash thee not," says the Saviour, "thou hast no part in me." And now Peter, consistent with himself, goes into the opposite extreme, consenting even to an extension of that act of humiliation on the part of the Saviour, against which he had previously demurred. "Lord," he cries, "not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." The conduct of Peter, here, was any thing but a proof of modesty or amiability. He

neither discharges his duty towards his Lord, nor towards his neighbour. He strives to exalt himself at the expense of the other apostles, and dares to sit in judgment upon Christ. The only thing worthy of admiration here, is the sweet persisting patience of Peter's Master.

EVIDENCE OF THE ACTS OPPOSED TO ROME.

Let us now proceed to the Acts of the Apostles. Here we have the Church. It is formed, and if Peter is head or chief, or prince of the apostles—if the charge of “*all the lambs and sheep without exception, that is, of the whole church,*” is vested in him, we shall doubtless find the proof of it *here* ; otherwise it exists *no where*. We shall find him acting as the head, or chief, or prince. He will be

treated by the brethren as such ; he will be represented as such — and not ambiguously, or inferentially ; but plainly and directly.

MATTHIAS CHOSEN IN THE PLACE OF
JUDAS.

We are in the Church, at the fifteenth verse of the first chapter, when about one hundred and twenty of the brethren are assembled. We read, “ And in those “ days, Peter stood up in the midst of the “ disciples.” We cannot see the sign of any headship here. He stands up “ in the “ midst of the disciples.” He is mingled with them. No peculiar place is appointed him, or taken by him. He rises from among them as any common member might be supposed to do, in any ordinary assembly, and addresses them upon

the necessity of filling up the vacancy which has occurred in the number of the apostles, on account of the fall of Judas Iscariot ; concluding thus, at the twenty-first and twenty-second verses, “ Where-
“ fore of these men which have com-
“ panied with us, all the time that the
“ Lord Jesus went in and out among us,”
&c. “ must one be ordained to be a wit-
“ ness with us of his resurrection.” His injunction is complied with—as would have been the case had any other of the apostles spoken to the same effect—and forthwith the common assembly act. “ They” appoint two, Barsabas and Matthias, for choice ; “ they” offer up prayer ; “ they gave forth their lots, and the lot
“ fell upon Matthias, and he was number-
“ ed with *the eleven apostles.*” Why does not the evangelist write here “ Peter and

“the rest,” or “Peter and the Apostles?” If such phrases bear out the interpretation of Rome in other parts of Scripture, why is not one or the other of them adopted *here*? Why is Peter treated as a common member of the chosen brotherhood, instead of standing alone, as he ought to do, in right of his alleged headship?

ELECTION OF DEACONS.

We come to another important event in the Church. If Peter possesses any headship, we shall unquestionably find it here. A new order of church functionaries is about to be created. The occasion is a solemn one, and doubtless the chief will preside—or there is *no* chief. We take the beginning of the sixth chapter,—“And “in those days, when the number of the “disciples was multiplied, there arose

“ a murmuring of the Grecians against
“ the Hebrews, because their widows were
“ neglected in the daily ministrations.
“ Then the twelve called the multitude of
“ the disciples unto them, and said, ‘ It is
“ not reasonable that we should leave the
“ word of God and serve tables, &c.’ ”
Why does not the evangelist in this place
write “ Peter and the rest,” or “ Peter and
“ the eleven,” or “ Peter and the apostles ? ”
Why is there not any allusion whatsoever
to Peter ? Why is he not particularised
as chief, or head, or prince ? Were he such
can any man persuade himself that so gross
an act of oversight would have been com-
mitted ? “ The twelve called the multitude
“ of the disciples unto them.” Then Peter
was merely regarded as *one* of the twelve !
He is considered as a common individual of
the number ; Matthias, the last of them,

is treated with as much respect as he. His office differs not an iota from that of Matthias. Matthias is one of the apostles, and Peter is nothing more. If he is any thing more, why is it not shown? Would the evangelist in that case suppress the fact? Certainly not. He was writing under the influence of the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost would not allow him to omit so important a fact, as the observance of the Saviour's *alleged* special ordination of Peter. Would Peter allow it to be suppressed? He was the very last man in the world to do so. If Peter was what the Church of Rome asserts him to have been, where is his fidelity to his Master? Why, upon such an occasion as this, does he not act as the chief shepherd? He it is that ought to summon the flock, address the flock, direct the

flock ; whereas it is a portion of the Church that does all this—a portion including the chief shepherd, without the least recognition of him as such ! Where can we meet with the parallel of such a lapse of positive, obvious duty ? No where ! The Saviour never appointed a chief shepherd ; or such disrespect is shown to the Saviour's appointment, as that of no merely earthly prince could possibly be exposed to.

PETER A MISSIONARY, ALONG WITH JOHN.

Or what recognition of Peter's headship do we find in the eighth chapter of Acts : “ Now when the Apostles which
“ were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria
“ had received the word of God, they sent
“ unto them Peter and John.” Strange usage this for a chief ! Peter and John stand upon the same footing, and are

treated accordingly. By the decision of their brethren they are sent to the new converts in Samaria! Extraordinary treatment this, for a chief! Peter's self-styled successor would stare were the college of cardinals to propose sending him upon a mission; and yet the relation which he bears to them is precisely that which Peter is alleged to have borne to the other Apostles. What instance can the whole world produce of such an act of authority, exercised by subjects towards their ruler? None! The Apostles hear that Samaria has received the word; consult thereon; and, as the result of their deliberations, send Peter along with John, in order to confirm the new disciples! They command, and Peter obeys—sets out forthwith for Samaria, as their messenger, or missionary! Where is his headship? Where is his

government ? He quits the seat of his authority, Jerusalem—at the bidding of those over whom he presides ! Did he possess that authority, ought we not to find some evidence of its existence here ? If his zeal for the service of his Master had induced him to abdicate his *chair* for a season—*for in Jerusalem he possessed that chair, or nowhere*—would it not have *appeared* to have been the case ? Would not the evangelist have respected Peter's rank, and given him credit for so extraordinary, so unparalleled an act of devotion and humility, by stating that the duty was undertaken by Peter, at his own suggestion—that he went of his own gracious choice—at his own modest option ? But no. He goes in obedience to the decision of his brethren ! What conclusion can any man of common sense come to,

here, but that all headship resided in the Apostles as a body, and not in Peter as an individual? that, in this instance, he was the mere representative of his brethren; and, consequently, that in any other instance, he could not have been anything else? He might be their counsellor, or their spokesman, or their agent; but, assuredly, not one jot could he sway them, independently of their own free choice. Without their concurrence, he could not move to the right hand or to the left in managing the affairs of the Church. Was this the position of a head, or chief, or prince?—not an *elected* one, observe; chosen from among them by the general voice, or by the voice of a majority; but an *absolute* one—one by competent authority placed over them, for universal direction and controul! Peter fills the chair at Je-

rusalem ; and lo, at a word from those over whom he presides, he descends from it, and obsequiously goes upon their errand !—leaves them, at the seat of his government, to act as they please !—appoints no deputy, or vicegerent, to supply his place for the time ; but sets out, side by side with his subject, John, upon a mission into Samaria, in implicit compliance with their ordination. Where was his headship ?

PETER BROUGHT TO ACCOUNT BY THE
CHURCH AT JERUSALEM.

But in how very different a position from that of chief, or prince, do we find Peter in the tenth chapter, after his return from baptizing Cornelius and his household. Here we find the flock arraigning the head shepherd ; here he is put upon his defence by that flock, and acknow-

ledges their right in that respect by pleading before them. Why does he not assert his headship *here*, and found his irresponsibility upon the acknowledged sanction of his Master?—a measure which, if that sanction had any existence, it was not only his privilege, but his *imperative duty* to have adopted! Or, if his exculpation of himself was an act of condescension, why does he not make it appear to be so? It was due, not only to his own honour, but to the honour of his Lord! If he had been invested with any peculiar, paramount authority; the fact ought to have been made manifest here. Though he might think proper, for the time, to waive that authority; still it ought to have been made apparent to the whole church that such authority existed; and he lets all authority go! Was this trust-worthiness in a

head shepherd ? Was this the deportment—the position—of a chief, or prince ? Peter is treated as the humblest of the flock ; and suffers it ! It may be said, that he was acting in obedience to his Master's precept, " He that is greatest " among you shall be your servant." Well and good ! But Peter ought to have asserted his office, as his Master's vicegerent ; as that Master asserted his own Lordship, after having washed his disciples' feet. " Ye call me Master and Lord, " and ye say well ; for so I am." Peter neither asserts himself to be the head shepherd, nor acts like the head shepherd ! Both of which he had assuredly done, had he *been* the head shepherd.

THE CIRCUMCISION OF THE GENTILE
CONVERTS DEBATED.

We come to another critical transaction

of the primitive church, and here we are, if possible, still more powerfully struck with the utter hollowness of the claim which Rome sets up for Peter—or rather for *herself*. When certain of the sects of the believing Pharisees agitate the question of circumcision with reference to the Gentile converts ; why do we read in Acts, fifteenth chapter, sixth verse, “ And “ the apostles and elders came together for “ to consider of this matter ? ” How comes Peter to be confounded here with the mass of the apostles and elders ? Where is his office of chief shepherd ?—his headship ?—his right as the prince of the apostles ; if we cannot find the least evidence of his pre-eminence here ? How come the sheep and lambs—“ *the charge of all of whom without exception* ” had been committed to Peter—how come they to assemble of

their own accord ? How comes it that Peter is confounded with the common flock ? How comes the evangelist to write at the seventh verse, “ And when there
“ had been much disputing, Peter rose
“ and said unto them, ‘ Men and brethren,
“ ye know that a good while ago God
“ made choice amongst us, that the Gen-
“ tiles by my mouth should hear the word
“ of the Gospel and believe, &c.” What sign of the rock, or of Peter’s headship do we recognize here ? If Peter really was what Rome asserts him to have been, wherefore the absence of all evidence of it here ? — why rates Peter no more than Paul or James, or any other individual of the Twelve ? — how comes James to sway the flock, upon this occasion, without any appeal to the head shepherd of the flock ? And why do we read at the twenty-second

verse, "Then pleased it the apostles and
"elders with the whole church, &c.?" Here
is a flagrant slight of Peter! His head-
ship is respected no more than if he had
never been possessed of any such thing!
He is treated as one of the flock, "*the*
charge of all" of which, as we are told,
was committed "*without exception to him!*"
And further, we read at the twenty-third
verse, "And they wrote letters to them"
—the Gentile converts—"after this man-
"ner: The apostles, and elders, and bre-
"thren send greeting, &c." What sign
of the rock have we here? Can we catch
a glimpse of it? Is there a single term
that breathes the least consciousness of its
existence? Or rather is there not the
most conclusive evidence that it never had
any existence at all? Before the evidence
of this single document, all that the craft of

Rome can urge in favour of Peter's headship must give way ! Here issues an edict of the most momentous weight—requiring the utmost solemnity in the manner of drawing it up, and the most specific statement of the authority under which it is delivered—and the name of the man, who is alleged to be the very head and front of all authority, never appears ! What conclusion can the candid unprejudiced Christian come to, even upon a cursory view of this chapter, except that the rock of Rome is a fable—and worse—a rankly antichristian dogma ; and that those who support that dogma take the evidence of human tradition, as the rule of their faith, in open, flagrant ignorance, if not in absolute, reckless defiance, of that of the word of God ?

EVIDENCE OF PAUL OPPOSED TO ROME.

But if Peter was the head of the church—if the Saviour had “*three times committed to him the charge of all his sheep and lambs without exception, that is of his whole church;*” it follows, inevitably, that Paul was under Peter’s jurisdiction—and the Gentile apostle was not likely to dispute the commands of the gracious Master, who had vouchsafed, in his instance, a special revelation. What light does Paul throw upon the point in question? Such as will scarcely be welcome to the advocate of Rome. In his first epistle to the Galatians, second chapter, seventh verse, he writes, “When they saw that the Gospel
“ of the uncircumcision was committed
“ unto me, as the Gospel of the circum-
“ cision was unto Peter,” &c. Here is a second head shepherd’—supposing Peter

to have been one. Paul places himself at once upon an equality with Peter—claiming—which is very like a hint to Rome—the pastorship of the Gentile church, to which Rome beyond all dispute belonged. But the headship of Peter is expressly denied in the very next verse but one ; where we read, “ But when James, Cephas,” (Peter) “ and John, who seemed to be pillars,” &c. Here is equality established among three of the twelve ; and James is given the precedence !—a circumstance which, if it does not bespeak credit for his being preferred before Peter, certainly does not afford any ground for believing that he was *inferior* to him. Could it occur by any possibility that an eye-witness—a friend—a fellow-labourer—could write thus of the appointed permanent head of a body of men, in concert with whom he had been

acting? What is the testimony of “ *perpetual tradition* ” when diametrically opposed to a fact like this? Here, by the evidence of the primitive church, Peter is declared to be nothing more than what James, or John, or Paul himself might claim to be. If Peter was the chief, it was robbery in Paul to withhold from him, here, the recognition of his title ; yet he unequivocally does so.

PETER’S FALL AT ANTIOCH.

But in the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth verses of this same chapter occurs a statement which fully bears out some of our previous comments upon Peter’s character, and supplies a further corroboration of the absence of all established headship in his particular. Here we find him under circumstances widely different

from those in which he stood when his Master was led a prisoner from the garden of Gethsemane—and he is the same Peter still ! He has been converted ; along with the other disciples, he has witnessed, not only the resurrection, but the ascension of the Saviour ; he has received in ample measure the gift of the Spirit ; the Divine power with which he is endowed has been tested by the judgment of Ananias and Sapphira ; he has raised Dorcas from the bed of death ; along with his brethren, he has been released from prison by the angel of the Lord ; a heavenly vision has been vouchsafed him, with reference to Cornelius and his family ; singly he has been thrown into bonds, and, upon the eve of his being brought forth by Herod to share the fate of James, he has been again miraculously delivered ; he has healed the

man at Lystra, who had been a cripple from his mother's womb, and had never walked ; and still does he appear as the weak respecter of persons ! There is an inherent infirmity as unalienable as the hue of his eye. Before the avowed enemies of his Master—when a point-blank challenge is made upon his fidelity, with his brethren at his back, or with one of them beside him, he stands firm—he is a man, and talks and speaks as one ; but among his friends, when opinion is to be conciliated, he wavers ; he falls ; he is a time-server ; he plays fast and loose. Devoid of moral courage, and utterly destitute of a due respect for his own character, he suffers himself to be exhibited to the whole visible church, of his own time, as an example of shameful vacillation and dishonesty ; and to be handed down as such

to remotest posterity ! Thus writes Paul concerning him : “ But when Peter was
“ come to Antioch, I withstood him to
“ the face, because he was to be blamed ;
“ for, before that certain came from James
“ he did eat with the Gentiles ; but when
“ they were come, he withdrew, and separated himself ; fearing them which were
“ of the circumcision ; and the other Jews
“ dissembled likewise with him ; insomuch
“ that Barnabas was also carried away
“ with their dissimulation. But, when I
“ saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel, I
“ said unto Peter before them all, ‘ If thou,
“ being a Jew, livest after the manner of
“ Gentiles, and not as do the Jews ; why
“ compellest thou the Gentiles to live as
“ do the Jews ? ’ ”

Here is an accidental, but unquestion-

able corroboration of what is related respecting Peter's denial of his Lord, *through the fear of men*. Here, in the fifty-eighth year of the christian era—only twenty-five years after the ascension of Christ—we find the same identical Peter, through the same identical weakness, incurring the gross charge of dissimulation ; and influencing perniciously by his example Barnabas and others at Antioch ; thereby subjecting himself to deserved, public, severe correction at the hands of the more manly Paul !—“ the least of the apostles, one “ born out of due time—not meet to be “ called an apostle.” Dreading the judgment of a few poor fellow-creatures, Peter forgets the vision that prepared him for compliance with the petition of Cornelius ; that commanded him to accompany the messengers of Cornelius ; that was borne

witness to by the Holy Ghost, when it descended uninvoked upon the family of Cornelius, even while Peter was only preaching the word—forgets his own responsibility as an apostle, and the prosperity of his Master's cause; and upon the arrival of certain brethren that came from James, slinks from the company of the Gentile Christians, with whom he had previously sat at meat; and thereby not only grievously sins, in his own instance, but is the cause of sin in others. The advocate for Rome, among other arguments, asserts Peter's headship from the necessity of *preserving unity in the church*. Here was preserving unity with a vengeance, and in the alleged *fountain* of unity! Here is schism originating in the very man who, as Rome asserts, was placed “ *over all the lambs and sheep without ex-*

ception, that *is of the whole church,*" for the express purpose of preventing schism ! But look at the deference which the head or chief, or prince, pays to those over whom he is set. Deference ?—He fears them ! He loses all sense of manhood in their presence ! He prostrates, abases himself before them ! and Barnabas and others, infected by his example, imitate him ! The grossest bigotry alone can contend for the headship of Peter after such an exhibition as this. "*Peter was to blame,*" says the advocate of Rome, "*and a superior may sometimes be lawfully reprehended by an inferior.*" This is nothing less than giving the lie to Paul, who asserts his equality with Peter in the seventh verse ; and who repeats the assertion in the ninth verse, where he distinctly disproves Peter's headship by naming him after James.

“ James, Cephas, and John,” is the order. What head, or chief, or prince, was ever so treated? None. With a similar absence of any recognition of headship, he names him along with himself and Apollos, in contradistinction with Christ, where in the first epistle to the Corinthians, first chapter, twelfth and thirteenth verses, he speaks of certain contentions. “ Now “ this I say, that every one of you saith, “ I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of “ Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? “ or were ye baptized in the name of “ Paul?” And again in the twenty-first, twenty-second, and twenty-third verses, “ Therefore let no man glory in men ; for “ all things are yours ; whether Paul, or “ Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or “ life, or death, or things present, or

“ things to come ; all are yours ; and ye
“ are Christ’s ; and Christ is God’s.”

PETER’S OWN EVIDENCE OPPOSED TO
ROME.

But whatsoever advantage the advocate for Rome may take of such expressions as “ Simon and they that were with him,” “ Peter and they that were with him,” “ Peter standing up with the eleven,”—it vanishes into mere delusion before the testimony of the apostle himself ; where he writes, as in the first chapter, first verse, of what is falsely designated his first epistle *general* “ Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,” or in the fifth chapter, first verse, “ The
“ elders who are among you I exhort,
“ who am also an elder,” or in the second epistle, first chapter, first verse, “ Simon
“ Peter, a servant, and an apostle of Jesus
“ Christ,” or in the third chapter of this

epistle, second verse, "That ye may be
" mindful of the words which were spoken
" before by the holy prophets, and of the
" commandment of us, the apostles of the
" Lord and Saviour." Not *the chief* of the
apostles, not *the chief* of the elders, not
the *chief servant and apostle*, not the com-
mandment of the apostles, *and of me Peter,*
their chief ; but *an* apostle, *a* servant and
apostle, *an* elder, the commandment of *us*
the apostles. Throughout the whole of his
two epistles, the least consciousness of his
headship never once breathes ; while there
is the clearest evidence of his ranking him-
self as a common member of the peculiar
brotherhood ; and while the fact, that his
brethren of the apostleship regarded them-
selves as perfectly independent of him, is as
clearly proved from the epistles of Paul,
James, John, and Jude ; in the writings of

whom no sentence or phrase occurs, which the most consummate ingenuity could torture into a recognition of his mastership or headship ; and as to the taunt that the Protestant translation “ *has foisted in the word other,*” in such phrases as Peter and the apostles, &c., in consequence “ *of clearly seeing that the original text too clearly expressed St. Peter’s being something more than the rest,*” the introduction of the term is authorized by Peter himself, as above ; and to his own testimony may be added that of Paul, at a period when Peter, had any headship been conferred upon him, would most certainly have assumed it. Thus writes the Gentile apostle in the first chapter, eighteenth and nineteenth verses, of his epistle to the Galatians : “ Then after three years I went up “ to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode

“ with him fifteen days ; but other of the
“ apostles saw I none, save James, the
“ Lord’s brother.” Here Paul is charge-
able with the offence which is laid at the
door of the Protestant translation. Why
does he not write, “ But of the apostles
saw I none,” instead of “ But *other* of the
apostles ?” Because he knew perfectly
well that Peter was only an apostle. Why
does Paul go up to see Peter ? Because
Peter, as the first called, or as the most
forward and allowedly able of the twelve,
stands first upon the list—and he is a
man that will assert the priority of his
call, or the advantage which he enjoys
from peculiar capability.* Why does Peter
always stand the first in the enumeration
of the apostles, while the rotation of the

* The peculiar notice which Christ takes of Peter, in consequence of his very swervings, would insure him a notoriety beyond that which attached to any of his fellows.

rest is occasionally changed? Because, after the first place, all the rest are comparatively of little account. Matthew and Luke perfectly correspond with regard to the first six ; and when Mark differs from them, by placing James and John before Andrew, he evidently does so in consequence of their being classed, as it were, with Peter, in receiving a particular name from the Lord. They were named by him Boanerges, or sons of thunder, as Simon was named Peter, or rock.

Thus have we proved *from Scripture*, that the advocate for Rome claims the headship for Peter upon a false interpretation of the word of God ; that *all* the collateral proofs to which he appeals, do damage to his cause instead of serving it ; that the proofs in direct contradiction are clear, emphatic, unanswerable, and, in

point of number, overwhelming ; that the primitive church declares against him ; that James, John, and Jude, are against him, inasmuch as they do not afford him the smallest countenance ; that Paul is expressly against him ; and that Peter himself is against him, in the self evident fact, that he describes himself as being nothing more than a common member of the apostolic brotherhood.

CHRIST OPPOSED TO ROME.

But what need of urging, at all, the inadmissibility of a doctrine which Christ himself has stamped with condemnation—and not once, but repeatedly !

In the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, first and three following verses, we read :
“ At the ~~same~~ time came the disciples
“ unto Jesus, saying, ‘ Who is the greatest
“ in the kingdom of heaven ?’ and Jesus

“ called a little child unto him, and set
“ him in the midst of them ; and said,
“ ‘ Verily I say unto you, except ye be
“ converted and become as little children
“ ye shall not enter into the kingdom of
“ heaven. Whosoever then shall humble
“ himself as this little child, the same is
“ greatest in the kingdom of heaven ’ ”

The Saviour knows that it is the leaven of human ambition— the lust after earthly precedence — which in reality prompts their question ; and He rebukes it accordingly.

In the twentieth chapter, beginning at the twentieth verse, we read : “ Then
“ came to him the mother of Zebedee’s
“ children with her sons, worshipping him,
“ and desiring a certain thing of him ; and
“ he said unto her, ‘ What wilt thou ?’
“ She said unto him, ‘ Grant that these

“ my sons may sit, the one on thy right
“ hand, the other on thy left, in thy king-
“ dom,’ &c. And when the ten heard it,
“ they were moved with indignation against
“ the two brethren ; but Jesus called them
“ unto him, and said, ‘ Ye know that the
“ princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion
“ over them, and they that are great exer-
“ cise authority upon them ; but it shall
“ not be so among you. But whosoever
“ will be great among you, let him be
“ your servant ; even as the Son of man
“ came not to be ministered unto, but to
“ minister, and give his life a ransom for
many.’ ”

The Saviour refers the petition of the mother,—the boast of her two sons (which we have omitted)—and the indignation of the ten ; to the same fleshly source ; and rebukes them accordingly, by instancing the

customs of this world, and denouncing all conformity thereto, in respect of lusting after mastery or headship.

In the twenty-third chapter, beginning at the second verse, we read: “ The
“ Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat,
“ &c. They make broad their phylacteries,
“ and enlarge the borders of their gar-
“ ments, and love the uppermost rooms
“ at feasts, and the chief seats in the
“ synagogue, and greetings in the market
“ place, and to be called of men, ‘ Rabbi,
“ Rabbi.’ But be not ye called Rabbi, for
“ one is your Master, even Christ, and ye
“ are all brethren; neither be ye called
“ Master, for one is your Master, even
“ Christ; but he that is greatest among
“ you shall be your servant ”

Upon what scriptural ground, or grounds, can the advocate of Rome defend himself from the charge of gainsaying Christ, by

giving the title of chief or prince to Peter ? If he pleads the nomination of bishops and deacons, he by no means extricates himself. Deacons and bishops were not princes or chiefs. They were servants in the true sense of the word, — labourers working for reasonable hire, selected by the apostles, or by their agents, as in the instances of Timothy and Titus,* for the instruction of the church. Had Peter been set over the church by Christ—had Christ declared him to be the head, or master, or chief, or prince of the apostles — then Christ had *contradicted* himself, which was *impossible*. The church has not any head, could not have any head, but Himself. Any church that acknowledges another, though that head be a secondary one, does not belong to Christ, but to Antichrist.

* Apostles, in the generic sense of the term, and not bishops.

In the twenty-second chapter of Luke, beginning at the twenty-fourth verse, we read : “ And there was also a strife among
“ them, which of them should be accounted
“ the greatest ? and he said unto them,
“ ‘ The kings of the Gentiles exercise
“ lordship over them, and they that exer-
“ cise authority over them are called bene-
“ factors ; but ye shall not be so ; but
“ he that is greatest among you, let him
“ be as the younger ; and he that is chief,
“ as he that doth serve ; for whether is
“ greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he
“ that serveth ? Is not he that sitteth at
“ meat ? But I am among you as he that
“ serveth.’ ”

The reasoning which the advocate for Rome opposes to those who quote this passage, as an argument against the headship of Peter, affords a signal instance of

the audacious recklessness with which truth and judgment are sacrificed, in order to uphold the arch dogma of that church. In reply to the supposed question, "*But does not our Lord intimate, Luke xxii. 24, 25, 26, that, amongst his disciples, none should be chief or head ?*" Challoner replies, " No ; but only he that is greatest should be as the younger ; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. Which words, so far from denying, evidently suppose a chief ; which is further confirmed by our Lord's alleging himself as an example, who was most certainly chief. So that what is recommended here, is not equality of jurisdiction, but humility in superiors."

Challoner, whatsoever he would be thought to believe, must have been thoroughly aware, as any man of even ordinary

apprehension needs must be, that the text, to which his imagined catechumen alludes, was fatal to the headship of Peter—most especially when examined in conjunction with certain other texts, which breathe precisely the same doctrine. *These*, however, he artfully keeps out of sight. His policy evidently was to try whether, by isolating the text of Luke, and taking advantage of its phraseology, in defiance of its obvious drift, he might not attach to it a meaning the very reverse of its legitimate one.

The legitimate meaning, he well knew, was to be met with in the twenty-third of Matthew ; but to meddle with Matthew would have been ruinous, as Matthew's diction defied all juggling : “ But be ye
“ not called Rabbi ; for one is your Mas-
“ ter, even Christ, and all ye are brethren.

“ Neither be ye called Masters ; for one
“ is your Master, even Christ. But he
“ that is greatest among you shall be your
“ servant.” The clause “ one is your
“ Master, even Christ,” precluded any
other Master ; and secured for the phrase,
“ he that is greatest,” that true interpretation,
of which Challoner endeavours to rob the same phrase where it occurs in Luke. Moreover, the clause, “ all ye are
“ brethren,” standing in direct antithesis
to “ one is your Master, even Christ,” and,
therefore, positively indicating that the
apostles were placed upon a perfectly equal
footing, one with another, baffled misrepresentation ; so as to render it impossible
for the father of lies himself to forge a
plea for maintaining the headship of Peter
here. Challoner also knew that the true
interpretation of Luke was to be found in

the ninth chapter of Mark: “ But He
“ came to Capernaum; and being in the
“ house, He asked them, ‘ What was it
“ that you disputed among yourselves by
“ the way ?’ But they held their peace—”
The question disconcerted them — brought
them to themselves — filled them with
shame at the thought of the carnal subject
of contention—“ for, by the way, they had
“ disputed among themselves, which should
“ be greatest.” Silence, however, could
not screen their fault from Him, who could
penetrate the profoundest recesses of their
hearts. “ And He sat down, and called
“ the twelve, and saith unto them, ‘ If *any*
“ man desire to be first, the same shall be
“ last of all, and servant of all.’ ” Here,
also, any attempt to tamper with the text
would have been hopeless; as the clause.
“ if any man desire to be first,” too clearly

indicated that *none* of the twelve had been appointed first, or was regarded as first ; while, at the same time, to become first, upon the Saviour's conditions, was left to the option of *any* one of the twelve. The text amounted to a point blank denial of Peter's pretended headship. But, to the perverted apprehension of Challoner, certain features in the text of Luke rendered it assailable by sophistry. First, the phrases " he that is greatest," and " he that is " chief—" which, handled apart from the context, might, as he thought, be turned to account in favour of Peter, or rather of Rome—might be successfully misrepresented as establishing the dogma that Christ had invested Peter with headship over the rest of the peculiar discipleship ; and, secondly, the passage where Christ refers to his own example, " But I am

“ among you as he that doth serve,” which, instancing servitude on the part of one *who was most certainly chief*, might be perverted into a warrant for concluding that the humility recommended bore reference to Peter, as the chief of the apostles.

Let us examine this text. “ And there “ was a strife among them which of them “ should be accounted the greatest.” Of what nature was the superiority for which they contended ? Christ himself tells you. “ And he said unto them, ‘ The kings of “ the Gentiles exercise lordship over them ; “ and they that exercise authority over “ them are called benefactors.’ ” The apostles had been disputing about place—headship—dictation—matters, congenial to what kings, and those, whom they *authorize* to act under them, enjoy—akin to what Rome

usurps in virtue of Peter. Christ, at once puts an end to such strife, extinguishes it for ever—for ever excludes it from the pale of his church ; “ But ye shall not be so.” None of the apostles should covet, in relation to the rest, any resemblance, whatsoever, to benefactors or kings. None of them should aspire to dominion or authority over their brethren. Christ now directs their emulation to an object which is strictly congenial with the nature of their calling—one which must be attended with the effect of utterly excluding any chance of envy or cavil—one which must perfectly cement and confirm their holy, peculiar brotherhood. “ But he that is “ greatest among you, let him be as the “ younger ; and he that is chief, as he “ that doth serve.” Superiority of greatness must be determined by exceeding in

modesty of pretension, and in humility of servitude. And now Christ proceeds to enforce this doctrine by condescendingly and conclusively setting before them His own example, that His servants should not scruple at that, to which it pleases their Lord to stoop: "For whether is " greatest, he that sitteth at meat, or he " that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at " meat? Yet I am among you, as he that " serveth." Exists there a possibility of even torturing this passage into an implied recognition of Peter's alleged headship? Because Christ, "*who was most certainly chief,*" performs the office of him "*that serveth ;*" will any man who—has not a sinister object at heart—who is not the very bigot of tradition—will any such man peril all credit for common sense and common veracity by asserting that, in alluding

to that circumstance, Christ recognizes the alleged headship of Peter? Are not the question of our Saviour, and the statement which he founds upon it—
“ Yet I am among you as he that serveth—” are they not applicable to every one of the twelve? and being so, is it possible to maintain that any one of the twelve can apply them, exclusively to himself? Glance forward to the thirteenth of John. There we find the same doctrine signally exemplified by the Saviour, and again enjoined by Him. Having washed the feet of His disciples, He says to them,
“ Know ye what I have done to you? Ye
“ call me Master and Lord; and ye say
“ well, for so I am; If I then your Lord
“ and Master, have washed your feet, ye
“ also ought to wash one another’s feet.”
What is the argument here, except it be this? “ If I your Lord and Master, so

humble myself with regard to you, who are my disciples, how much more ought every one of you, among whom there exists neither lordship nor mastership, to exercise towards his fellows the offices of humility." And now glance back to Matthew and Mark. "One is your Master, even Christ, and "all ye are brethren"—"If any man desire "to be first, the same shall be last of all "and servant of all." The same doctrine is to be found in *other* texts. Thus, with regard to the alleged headship of Peter; thus, Christ himself stands again and again in direct, palpable opposition to the church which dares to style herself His own!

Paul alone puts a direct negative upon the pretensions which Rome sets up for Peter, or rather for herself. In the first verse, first chapter of his epistle to the Galatians, he distinctly declares his independence of all the other peculiar brother-

hood. He says : “ Paul, an apostle, not
“ of men, neither by man, but by Jesus
“ Christ, and God the Father, who raised
“ him from the dead.” Most clearly is
the headship of Peter denied in this pas-
sage. Assuredly, he possessed no head-
ship over Paul, and if not over Paul, as
assuredly not over any other of the apos-
tles. Again, Paul writes, 2nd Corinthi-
ans, xii. 11, “ In nothing am I behind
“ the very chiefest apostles,” most likely
alluding to James, Cephas, and John,
“ though I be nothing.” What is Chal-
loner’s reply to this ? “ *It is visible,*” he
says, “ *that St Paul speaks with regard to*
his labours, miracles, and doctrine, in which
he was inferior to none ; but whether St.*
Peter or he had a superior jurisdiction was
foreign to the matter he had then in hand ;
and therefore no wonder that he takes no

* In labours and sufferings, he was superior to all.

notice of it.”. No wonder, rather, that he takes no notice of what did not exist ! It is true that Paul alludes here to his labours : but it is indisputable that he speaks of “ chiefest apostles,” a phrase which refers either to James, Cephas, and John, whom he represents as being equally pillars of the church ; or to the whole apostolic brotherhood, who were “ chiefest ” with regard to him, in the priority of their commission, or in their long companying with the Lord, previous to his death. Apostles were numerous at the time when Paul wrote ; but the chiefest were the twelve.

OBVIOUS CAUSE OF SIMON’S BEING SUR-
NAMED PETER.

But why was the name of Peter, or rock, bestowed upon Simon ?

Simon was called Peter, because he was the first among the peculiar discipleship,

to proclaim the grand article of faith upon which the church was to be built. He, to whom the past, the present, and the future, are as one, foreknew that Peter would take precedence of his brethren in acknowledging that Jesus was the Christ,—the promised Messias ; and therefore in his first interview with him he says, “Thou shalt be called Cephaz,” otherwise *Peter*. The Saviour fulfils his promise when that which he foreknew takes place. Simon declares that Jesus is “the Christ, the Son of the living God—” propounds the stupendous truth, upon which the church of his Master is to be founded, as upon a rock—and hence he receives the name of Peter, or rock, in obvious simple commemoration of his being the first to bear testimony to the divine mission of Jesus. Had the Redeemer given that name with such a view

as the Church of Rome alleges, how different a personage had Peter appeared in the remainder of Matthew's history; as well as in the gospels of Mark and Luke—who in their respective accounts of the very same transaction, omit wholly the words which Christ addresses to Peter; while the transaction itself is never even alluded to by John. And what would have been the case with reference to the Acts? At every step we should have met with the authoritative irresponsible dictation of Peter as the rock upon which the church, then in progress, was founded; whereas he is again and again presented to us as the *subject*, and not the *organ*, of question and direction! Upon the evidence of one solitary sentence, capable of only one rational interpretation, is it asserted that Peter is the foundation of the Church of Christ! the

rock upon which that church is built !
What a foundation for such an edifice !
I assert upon the evidence of common sense, that had the Saviour's meaning been such as the Church of Rome pretends to suppose, He would have said, " And upon " *thee* " will I build my Church,"—a declaration which it would have been a heinously criminal act of oversight in Mark, Luke, and John, to have failed in recording ; whereas, interpreting the text consistently with the whole argument of Scripture, as relates to Christ, the omission, as I said before, is not only perfectly venial, but absolutely unimportant ; for not only by Christ's own lips, by Christ's own acts, by the acts of his disciples, when first sent forth to preach, by the voice of the Father speaking from the cloud, but by the very recognition of the

Arch Enemy himself, is the truth established that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God—the truth—the rock upon which that superstructure is raised, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail.

THE DOGMA OF A PRESIDING CHURCH,
ANTICHRISTIAN.

We pass from the headship of Peter to that of the Church of Rome, and of his self-styled successors.

“How do you prove that the Pope, or Bishop, of Rome is the successor of St. Peter ?

“I prove it, 1st, because the church never acknowledged any other for her chief pastor ; and no other does or ever did put in a claim to the spiritual supremacy, in quality of Saint Peter’s successor; so thus supposing what has been proved, that Christ appointed

a chief pastor for his church, the bishop of Rome must be the man."

" 2ndly, I prove it from the ancient sense of the holy fathers and councils that have acknowledged this supremacy in the see of Rome, and her bishops. See St. Ignatius, disciple of the apostles, in the beginning of his epistle to the Romans, where he calls the church of Rome the presiding church. St. Irenæus, L. iii. c. 3, who calls the same 'the greatest and most ancient church, founded by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul,' and adds that 'all sectaries are confounded by the Roman tradition, for to this church by reason of its more powerful principality,' says he, 'it is necessary that every church resort, or have recourse, in which (church) the apostolic tradition has always been preserved by those that are in every place.' And St.

Cyprian, in his 55th epistle to Pope Cornelius, where he calls the See of Rome the chair of Peter, and the principal church, from which the priestly unity has its origin, &c.

. “*See also St. Optatus, Bishop of Milevis, in his second book against Parmenianus, the Donatist Bishop of Carthage, where he thus addresses himself to his adversary: ‘ You cannot pretend to be ignorant that Peter held first the bishop’s chair in the city of Rome, in which Peter, as head of all the apostles, sat, in which single chair unity might be maintained by all, lest the rest of the apostles should each one claim his own separate chair, so that he is now a schismatic and an offender who against this single chair erects any other. In this one chair, which is the first of the properties of the church, Peter first sat ; to him succeeded Linus, to*

him Clement, &c. Give you now an account of the origin of your chair, you who claim to yourselves the holy church.' "

If during the lives of the apostles, Antichrist, as Scripture asserts, insinuated himself into the church ; if the lust for mastery baffled, here and there, as we read, their endeavours to maintain the church in a state of conformity with the spirit of the gospel ; if a brother now and then committed the sin of heresy, by attempting to erect himself into a chief ; much more may we look for the occurrence of such an evil, when their authorized personal superintendence was withdrawn. Then sprang up an authority never intended by the Saviour, though foreseen by him, and distinctly foretold by him and his apostles—traditional au-

thority ; the authority of the so called fathers.

Ignatius, we are told, as above, propounded the dogma that “ *the Church of Rome* ” is “ *the presiding church ;* ” and Irenæus asserts that it is “ *the greatest and most ancient church, founded by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul.* ” How comes Irenæus to place Paul side by side with the *head shepherd* ? Paul, according to *Rome*, was one of Peter’s flock ! Irenæus betrays great ignorance, or a very questionable respect for truth. The Church of Rome was founded long before Paul set foot in that city ! Paul himself gives the lie to Saint Irenæus ; or convicts him of being egregiously ill-acquainted with the history of the church, the pretensions of which he attempts to establish. Thus the apostle of the gospel shuts the

mouth of the apostle of tradition : “ Paul,
“ a servant of Jesus Christ, &c., to all
“ that be in Rome, beloved of God, called
“ to be saints ; Grace to you and peace
“ from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus
“ Christ. First I thank my God, through
“ Jesus Christ, for you all, that your faith
“ is spoken of throughout the whole world,
“ &c. For I long to see you, that I may
“ impart to you some spiritual gift, to the
“ end you may be established,”—the end
of all who preach the truth to any society of
scripture Christians,—“ that is, that I may
“ be comforted together with you, by the
“ mutual faith both of you and me,”—the
faith which the Church of Rome *already*
possessed, as well as professed. Paul did
not found the Church of Rome, and con-
sequently Peter did not found it—if indeed
Peter ever set foot in Rome ! Again ; the

Church of Rome is not the most ancient church. The Greek Church takes precedence of it, upon the authority of Scripture. Upon the same authority, the Asiatic Church takes precedence of the Greek Church. Philadelphia, Thyatira, Pergamos, Smyrna, *still* call upon the name of Christ. Jerusalem was the mother church of all these, as she was of that of Rome ; so that *in no point of view whatsoever*, can Rome establish her headship. It is equally an imposture, in the absence or in the presence of Peter's headship. We grant her to be the greatest church—but not of Christ, when we examine the word of God for her title—but greatest only as regards the *number* of her disciples.

“ But Ignatius, a disciple of the apostles,” calls Rome “ the presiding church.” Were Ignatius one of the apostles them-

selves, he sins in doing so. In asserting what he does, he is prompted, not by the *spirit*, but by the *flesh* ; he savours “ not “ the things that be of God, but those “ that be of men.” The Church of Christ is, according to Scripture, eternally and unalterably one building, of which Christ himself is the chief corner stone, and of which the apostles are the foundation ; “ and other foundation can no man lay.” Whence comes that other foundation, Tradition ? From Tradition we receive the Scriptures. But we *have* the Scriptures, and we have done with Tradition. Do we need Tradition to interpret the Scriptures for us ? No. Tradition possesses no more certain access to the minds and hearts of the sacred writers than we ourselves do ! We shall interpret Scripture for ourselves with the help of a better

assistant than Tradition—with prayer and faith. Tradition is mere flesh and blood, as we ourselves are ; and the Spirit is approachable by *all*, and promises to become the instructor of all that seek : “ Seek, “ and ye shall find.” We shall trust to the Spirit—we shall trust in the Saviour—we shall trust in God ! We shall listen to the word of God, before the word of Tradition. We know that Tradition has *mystified* the word of God—*corrupted* it—*misrepresented* it. We shall go to the word of God itself. It is no riddle, which requires an Œdipus, far less Tradition, to solve it. It is apprehensible by the understanding of the simple : “ I thank thee, “ O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, “ because thou hast hid these things from “ the wise and prudent, and hast revealed “ them unto babes.” We shall listen to

Jesus Christ in preference to Tradition. We will not be the babes of Tradition, but the babes of God.

Now, what could possibly give to any one particular body of Christians the right and title of presiding over every other such body ? Nothing, assuredly, but the express, unmistakable command of Jesus Christ, coming directly from himself, or communicated through His apostles. The primitive Church of Christ was, beyond all possibility of dispute, that which was instituted at Jerusalem immediately upon the ascension of our Lord. It consisted at first, as we are told, of about one hundred and twenty brethren ; and its first ecclesiastical act was the appointing of Matthias to fill up the vacancy occasioned by the treason of Judas Iscariot ; that the number of the apostles might still correspond with the num-

ber of the tribes—a token of the love, and of the long-suffering of the Father, with respect to his chosen people ; and a testimony against those, amongst that people, whoshould persist in rejecting the Son. Still was the Church of Jerusalem nothing more than what it could not fail to be—the mother church ; whence the preaching of the *word*, and not the preaching of *herself*, as in the flagrant instance of Rome, was to go forth. She neither claimed any headship, nor recognized, nor dreamed of any headship, save that of Christ. She looked up to the apostles, in common, inasmuch as they were the peculiar, actual witnesses of what Christ taught and did—but she did not hesitate to question even *their* proceedings, when there existed a doubt as to their orthodoxy. Hence Peter is catechised by the Church at Jerusalem ; hence Paul

appeals to that church ; hence James, as well as Peter, addresses that church in favour of Paul's appeal ; and hence that church approves and adopts the counsel of James ; and causes a letter to be drawn up, in the spirit of James's counsel ; wherein, in the name of the *apostles, and elders, and brethren*, she extends the right hand of fellowship to the converts of the uncircumcision ; so that the Gentile and the Jew enter the same fold, and obey the voice of the same shepherd—Christ, not Peter.

And let no stress be laid upon the discipleship or martyrdom of Ignatius, when he asserts what Scripture not only does not bear out, but absolutely contradicts. Rather let a hint be taken from the language of Paul, where he reproves the backsliding of the Galatians, and denounces

false teachers ; as we read in the first chapter, eighth verse, of his epistle to that church : “ But though we, or an angel
“ from heaven, preach any other gospel
“ unto you than that which we have
“ preached unto you, let him be accursed.” The gospel forbids, condemns, all individual authority—mastership, lordship—in spiritual matters. The apostles, above all Christians, might be supposed to be entitled to such a thing ; yet though shepherds they were, occasionally, as answerable to the flock as the flock were to them—as in the instance of Peter. Christ is sole authority. It is he that accepts or rejects, condemns or approves — by His word. The table of His laws is before us. Independently of what those laws decree, we have nothing to do with Tradition.

The advocate for Rome proceeds : “ See

also St. Optatus, bishop of Milevis, in his 2nd book against Parmenianus, the Donatist bishop of Carthage, where he thus addresses himself to his adversary, ‘ You cannot pretend to be ignorant that Peter held first the bishop’s chair in the city of Rome, in which Peter, as head of all the apostles, sat ; in which single chair unity might be maintained by all, lest the rest of the apostles should each one claim his own separate chair, &c.’

Saint Optatus sets out with a palpable fiction. Paul, beyond all question, preceded Peter ; if indeed, as I hinted before, Peter ever set foot in Rome. Nor was it by any means likely, supposing these two apostles to have resided in that city at the same time, that the latter should have superseded the former—who claims, before the whole church, the title of “ the apostle “ of the Gentiles ;” whom the whole church

recognizes as such ; and who could support his pretensions thereto by the express sanction of his Lord, repeated in the vision of Ananias, and reiterated, subsequently, in sundry revelations of the Holy Ghost. Indeed, at first sight, it appears extraordinary that a Gentile church should have selected for its head an apostle, the object of whose mission is declared in Scripture to have been the conversion of the peculiar people of God ; in preference to one especially appointed for that of the Gentiles. But the wonder vanishes when we refer to Matthew. A carnal rock being substituted for the spiritual one described by that evangelist, afforded a foundation for a claim of headship which could not be extracted from the plausible perversion of any passage in the history or epistles of Paul. Nevertheless, the Roman fathers inadver-

tently betray a secret conviction of the superior claim of Paul, uniting him with Peter in the ordination of Linus and Clement ; in laying the foundation of the Roman see ; and as the origin of what is most preposterously styled “ Apostolic Succession.”—We say *most preposterously*, because such a succession was *morally impossible*—unless the apostles could bequeath to their successors the eyes that had seen Jesus ; the ears that had heard him ; the hands that had touched him ; and, along with these, the power of working miracles, and of conferring the Holy Ghost—a power which if ever enjoyed by any one bishop or pope in the annals of the Roman see, must of necessity have been enjoyed by every one such bishop and pope ; and must exist at this very moment in the same miraculous vigour

which characterised it at the commencement of the church in Jerusalem !

But the extraordinary reason for Peter's headship—as propounded by Saint Optatus—the *preservation of unity*—"lest the rest of the apostles should each one claim his own particular chair." What an insinuation against those holy men ! What a denial of the inspiration with which they were endowed ! What a neutralizing of the breathing of the Holy Ghost from the very lips of the just ascending Saviour ! What a calumny against the Holy Ghost itself ! Did they not devote their lives to one and the same cause ? Did they not look up to one and the same Head ? Had they not been instructed in one and the same gospel ? Were they not moved—inhabited—by one and the same spirit ? Did they not preach one and the same doctrine ?

And ought they to be spoken of as a band of traitors likely to betray their great Captain—Christ—by creating division in the camp? Supposing they had acted independently of each other—supposing them to have been scattered thousands of miles apart, without the possibility of communicating with one another, directly or indirectly, through the whole course of their remaining mortal sojourn, *after* having received the Holy Ghost—what could have resulted in the several brotherhoods, which each one of them would have founded, but unity—uniformity—one church—so long as their immediate superintendence was permitted? Herein they were infallible so long as they failed not in their fidelity; for so long the Spirit would have continued with them, and the Spirit is infallible! Paul, in the fervour of his untiring zeal,

might have made converts at both the poles, while Peter had remained labouring in Palestine and the countries adjacent to it; still would the converts of each have proved to be the consorting members of one church, composed of bishops, and deacons, and brethren!—three orders, no degrees! The deacon, a brother; and the bishop, or overseer, or minister, no more!—as any member of a domestic fraternity may be supposed to instruct the rest, or to manage their temporal affairs, without ascending one inch above that equality which is enjoyed by *all*, in right of a common parentage! How grossly carnal a conception, that, with the living God to look up to for the government of his kingdom, the spiritual as well as the visible sovereignty of that kingdom should be claimed to be vested in a poor human

creature !—in a worm ! What could be expected from so sacrilegious a heresy except what we have seen, and what we still see—earthly domination—the lust of aggrandisement—pomp, power, riches, territories ! Instead of the meek and lowly Jesus, perambulating, in poverty and humility, the cities and villages of Judea and Samaria, attended by his indigent disciples, each with no more than a simple suit, a staff, and a pair of sandals—instead of the meek and lowly Jesus, thus circumstanced, and thus accompanied ; his self-styled vicegerent—who, if differing in any thing, ought if possible to be poorer, and humbler, and worse escorted—parading, as its residing king, the streets of the proudest city of the earth ; and environed, if it so please him, with all the ministers, and guards,

and paraphernalia, of a mere worldly potentate !

The craft of the Master, and the several occupations of the brotherhood that followed him, ought to have suggested a successionship far different from that of statesmen, warriors, and potentates ! The Saviour himself disclaims his vicegerent, where he declares, “ My kingdom is not of “ this world.” Whom did the priest serve, that, with this plain, positive, unmistakable proclamation staring him in the face, first dared to mount a throne ; assume a crown ; grasp a sceptre—no matter what its shape ; fortify himself with the sword ; wage war ; claim chiefship among the potentates of this world ; arrogate to himself the disposal of realms ; blast nations with his breath—confounding the innocent with the guilty, the believer with the infidel, in

the havoc of the unholy pestilence—suspending or permitting, according to his gust, the worship of the living God—and interpreting the heavenly errand of peace and good will as a warrant from very hell, to ply the rack and light the fagot? Such have been, though in every respect they are not so at present, such have been the distinguishing characteristics of the papacy — and such, from the essential nature of that arch usurpation, may they become again ! The elements are there ! The most revolting of these traits have stamped occasionally the pontificate. And who can contemplate those which are least repugnant—the circumstances of earthly sway and gain and aggrandizement—and hesitate for a moment to connect them with the existence and superintendence of that prince of this world who presided—

though by sufferance—over the apprehending, the subjecting trial, the mocking, the scourging, the bearing to execution, and the crucifying of the Prince of Heaven?—of Him, who, from the commencement to the termination of His sojourn in the flesh amongst us, admonished and stipulated, as one of the prime conditions of salvation, the withdrawal of our thoughts and wishes from the *things of time*, and the riveting of them upon the *things of Eternity*!

It was a bold heresy!—every way, the worthy suggestion of the arch Anarch; and obviously congenial to the locality in which it first sprang up—Rome, long the queen of nations! Here was a device for perpetuating her glory, though in another form—for preserving her domination; but to an extent, and with a uniformity, unattainable before, from the nature of human

affairs ! An illimitable carnal tyranny established under the cloak of spiritual supervision and authorization ! The Cesars, again, but without the vulnerability of the Cesars ! One Throne, as one Earth ! A succession of potentates, pretended, but believed, to be proclaimed by the word of God ; almost co-equal with Him, as His professed and accepted vicegerents ; and, being identified with Him in His worship, secure of the allegiance of His worshippers ; and claiming, as its tributaries, the whole family of merely earthly potentates ! Exploit worthy the arch Anarch, and thoroughly redounding to his glory, in the birth, nurture, growth, maturing, and flourishing of lusts, than which more abominable never disgraced the most profligate fleshly throne ! Look to the annals of the sec, throughout many centuries, and you will find there, worse than the

accumulated* ordure of the Augean stables! Take the least exceptionable, in the enumeration of her spiritual princes, and count the features in which the successor of Peter bears any resemblance to *him*, in virtue of whose alleged headship he sits where he does. Pry for a glimpse of the humility, the poverty, the labours, the privations, the sufferings of the converted apostle—the vouchers for the genuineness of his vocation, and the seals of his faith! Or glance from the vicegerent to the King, his Master—and look at the texture of that Master's cloak! The meanest *servant* of the vicegerent would trample upon such a garb! Behold that Master, without a place to lay his head, and follow his vicegerent to the pillow upon which he reposes, beneath the roof of a palace! Contemplate the scrip of the Master, with not a

shilling in it, when the tribute-money is demanded ; and open the caskets that contained the cushioned jewels of the vicegerent ! Menace the vicegerent, and his nations bristle with bayonets ; one sword is drawn for the Master in the garden of Gethsemane—and that, by a feeble hand—and he commands it to be put up, and heals the wound of the smitten ! An ear only of the smitten bleeds for the Master ; millions of hearts have poured out their blood for the vicegerent—in revenge—in persecution—in the prosecution of conquest—in murder and assassination ! It is not the Jews alone to whom the saying of Christ refers : “ For this people’s “ heart is waxed gross, and their ears are “ dull of hearing, and their eyes they have “ closed ; lest at any time they should “ see with their eyes, and hear with their

“ ears, and should understand with their
“ hearts, and should be converted, and I
“ should heal them.”

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION A FICTION OF
ANTICHRIST.

The doctrine of Apostolic Succession is a fleshly dogma, invented with the view of establishing an exclusive *temporal* authority over the visible Church of Christ, for the gratification of the most odious and baneful of human lusts—Ambition ! Hear the evidence of the saints themselves, of the church, complacently quoted by the advocate of the Rock of Rome : “ *Saint Prospero, in his dogmatic poem against the enemies of grace, calls Rome the see of Peter, which, being made the head of pastoral dignity, rules by religion all that she possesses not by her arms ; and to the same effect,*

Saint Leo the Great, in his first sermon upon St. Peter and St. Paul, thus addresses himself to Rome : ‘ These are they who have advanced thee to this glory, that, being made the head of the world, by being St. Peter’s see, thou hast a wider extent of religious empire than of earthly dominion. For though by thy many victories thou hast extended thy dominions far and near, by sea and land, yet that which has been subdued by the labour of thy arms is not so much as that which has been made subject to thee by Christian peace.’ ” What a confession have we here ! How strange and audacious a jumbling of fleshly and spiritual things have we here ! How impudent and revolting a union of two kingdoms which the Saviour declared to be perfectly opposed to one another, and thoroughly irreconcilable. Here it is never dissembled, but absolutely boasted, that the

vicegerent betrays and defies his *Master*—declares God to be a liar by asserting that His Kingdom *is* of this world, and by practically proving it! “Put up the sword,” exclaims the King to Peter. “Draw the sword,” exclaims the vicegerent, and sets the example in his own saintly person! “Draw it that I may extend the dominions of Christ!” Christ disowns such dominions. His dominions are the souls of men; souls won by mercy!—love!—won by the shedding of His own blood, and not by shedding that of His followers—souls washed by His blood from their sins; and, clothed in His imputed righteousness, presentable to the Father, as the spoil of that victory over sin and death which was achieved upon Calvary—not by the sword, but by the Cross! But to return to Apostolic Suc-

cession—that fleshly heresy—the fruits of whose domination are graphically foretold in the Revelations—so graphically that he who runs may read !—To return, I say, to Apostolic Succession. It is a fraud, however innocently it may be believed to be the reverse by the millions that subscribe to it. It is a fraud upon the direct testimony of scripture. It was never designed by the Saviour that the apostles should have successors. They were the foundation of His church ; and the foundation, once laid, was done with. It was neither to be added to, nor taken from, nor altered, nor touched. It was perfect ! and the building rose at once, in the primitive church—and, in its construction, *that* was perfect—neither to be added to, nor taken from, nor altered, nor touched ! In the days of the apostles that church conferred upon

no one Gentile community any privilege which elevated it above another. Rome rated no higher than Corinth ; or Corinth, or Rome, than the house of Philemon. Brotherhood, and not mastery and dependency, was the relation which subsisted among all Christian communities ; nor would Christ display towards a congregated million of his worshippers more condescension than he promises to the smallest handful of them, when he says, “ Where
“ two or three are gathered together in
“ my name, there am I in the midst of
“ them.” Neither does he deal less graciously with an individual than with the handful, or the million. “ If a man love
“ me, he will keep my words ; and my
“ Father will love him, and we will come
“ in unto him, and make our abode with
“ him.”

God, who is no respecter of persons, is most assuredly no respecter of *classes* ; that out of the various Christian communities which He established, He should select one to give laws to all the rest. Far less is He a respecter of *places*, that He should appoint this city, or that city, to give its name to the whole body of His disciples—the individual qualifications of whom, as such, are the sole object of His regard. It is not Paul or Peter whom Christ acknowledges ; it is the qualifications of Paul or Peter ; and therefore the man, who alleges that he stands in the shoes of either of these apostles, must produce the qualifications of the one or the other of them, or he is an impostor.

THE POWER OF CONFERRING THE HOLY
GHOST NOT COMMUNICABLE.

But Apostolic Succession !—where, let us ask, was the need of it ? Have we not the apostles themselves ? Have we not, in them, the actual witnesses of the Saviour's sojourn among us, and of all that He taught and did ? Examine their pretensions, by their own evidence. Does not the perfect consistency and harmony of that evidence vouch for its truth ? Point to that text in John, James, Jude, or Peter, the spirit of which you do not find in the doctrine of Christ. Do they add to that doctrine, or alter it, or qualify it ? Not to the amount of a hair. The streams are many, but the fountain is one, and the waters are one. Examine Paul while he speaks from *inspiration*—and would he had

never allowed himself to speak otherwise—Christ preaching upon the mount is in every maxim, and every inference and argument. There was a headship in the apostles, because there existed peculiar qualifications in them. They had especially “ companied with ” one another “ all the “ time that the Lord Jesus went in and out “ among ” them. They were the chosen of the Lord, from the peculiar fitness to constitute the foundation of His church ; and that men should have no excuse for infidelity, He endowed them with a peculiar power—that of conferring the Holy Ghost. As they testified for Christ, so the Holy Ghost testified for them, that their witness was true. And this testifying of the Holy Ghost was not a matter of mere belief on the part of those whom they converted, but of absolute personal expe-

rience ; as they received from the apostles the same supernatural power which the apostles themselves possessed—that of speaking with tongues and working miracles—but *there that power terminated*. The recipients could not impart it, as it had been imparted to them ; so that, though there were hundreds, perhaps thousands of apostles at the time—of apostles in the *generic* sense of the term—disciples *sent* into all parts to preach the word—yet were there only twelve in the *specific* sense ; twelve men, set apart and sealed, as the foundation of the building ; qualified to become such by their most intimate intercourse with the Saviour ; and sealed by the enjoyment of powers which were imparted to none beside, with the *sole exception of Paul*. Philip was the brother deacon of Stephen

—whose face, when he stood before the council that questioned him, appeared to them like the face of an angel ; and who, being full of the Holy Ghost, and looking up into heaven, “ saw the glory of God ; “ and Jesus standing on the right hand of “ God.” Philip was also full of the Holy Ghost. By the power imparted to him, through the apostles, he could work the same miracles that they did ; *but he could not enable others to work them.* He could cast out devils ; he could restore the use of their limbs to the lame, and heal those that were taken with palsies ; but he could not confer the Holy Ghost in the same degree as the apostles, *to external proof, by signs following, of its being received.* Accordingly, Peter and John were sent into Samaria to put their seals to the work ;

and at their intercession, followed by the laying on of hands, the new converts received the Holy Ghost—"which as yet " was fallen upon none of them." And those converts *exhibited the proof* of having received it at the hands of John and Peter ; for when " Simon, which aforetime in the " same city used sorcery,"—"saw that " through the laying on the hands of " the apostles the Holy Ghost was given, " he offered them money, saying, ' Give " me also the power, that on whomsoever " I lay hands he may receive the Holy " Ghost.' " It cannot be urged that Philip possessed the same power, and would not employ it : as no possible reason can be assigned for his not employing it, *had* he possessed it ; whereas there is every reason to believe the contrary ; namely,

that had he possessed it, he *would* have employed it. On the same grounds, it cannot be urged that the apostles could have enabled Philip to transmit the Holy Ghost. Where then is apostolic succession ? The need for the apostles consisted in their efficiency in this respect, as well as in their being the personal witnesses of the facts for which they vouched. Take away these things, and where are the apostles ? Where are the successors of the apostles, without these things ? What does the pope possess that you and I do not possess ? He is the successor of Peter ? Show me his title in the word of God ! The advocate for the rock of Rome pretends to show it. “*How do you prove that St. Peter was to have a successor in the office of chief Bishop of the Church ?*” “*Because as Christ established*

His Church to remain till the end of the world, Matt. xxviii. 20, so he most certainly designed that the form of government which He established in His Church should remain for ever. Hence, supposing the supremacy of St. Peter, (which we have proved above from Scripture) it cannot be questioned but that our Lord designed that this supremacy which He appointed for the better governance of His Church, and the preserving of unity, should not die with Peter no more than the Church, with which He promised to remain for ever, but should descend after Peter's decease to his successors. For it is not to be imagined that Christ should appoint a Chief Bishop for the government of His Church, and maintaining unity, in the Apostles' time, and design another kind of government for succeeding ages, when there

was a probability of greater danger of schism ; and, consequently, more need of one head to preserve all in one faith, and one communion.

The advocate for Rome ought never to appeal to scripture. Scripture rejects and rebukes him. What says Matthew ? when the eleven disciples go into Gallilee as Jesus had appointed. “ And Jesus came “ and spake unto them, saying — ‘ All “ power is given unto me, in Heaven “ and in Earth. Go ye therefore, and “ teach all nations, baptizing them in “ the name of the Father, and of the Son, “ and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them “ to observe all things whatsoever I have “ commanded you ; and lo, I am with you “ alway, unto the end of the world.” Where is the proof of Apostolic Succes-

sion here ? • Where is the mention of Peter, or of Peter's successor ? The declaration of the Saviour is addressed to *all* the eleven. All are to teach ; all are to baptize ; the Saviour is to be with *all*, “ alway, “ unto the end of the world.” Not with Peter alone, but with *every one* of the eleven. If this promise then is to be made good by successorship, each apostle must have his successor. Where is the successor of John, Philip, Andrew, and the others ? But Peter is head shepherd ! Well and good ! The pope, we shall allow, stands for Peter. Who answer for Stephen, Thomas, Bartholomew, and the others ? Christ is to be with *them* “ alway to the “ end of the world.” In whom do we see them now ? If the fulfilment of the promise depends upon successorship, we

demand to see *their* successors," as well as the successors of Peter—*albeit the head shepherd*. The promise is as binding with respect to them, as it is with respect to him. If it is not fulfilled, in successorship, with regard to them, successorship is not the means of fulfilling it. Successorship failing in their instances, successorship is a fable ; or the Saviour's promise is a forgery—if its genuineness depends upon *succession*. But the Saviour is to be with the eleven *always* to the end of the world. And is he not with them ? Is he not with them here ? Here in this very room where I am writing ? Need I go to Rome to witness the fulfilment of the promise ? to prove the truth of the word of Him that cannot lie ? to prove it upon the evidence of a fiction invented by men, and

defended by men upon a *gross misinterpretation* of the word of God; and, by the all-allowed, evidence of history, producing crimes, than which more odious do not exist in the black registry of hell? Need I go to Rome, I say, to satisfy myself by ocular demonstration—by looking upon St. Peter's successor, and prostrating myself before a fellow worm—that Christ is now with his apostles, and will be “always” with them unto the end of the world? *Here*, Christ is with them. Here, in His own word—in the Bible! in the *indestructible* Bible! in the Bible, now, even now, in the nineteenth century, the same as it was in the first, though the different portions of it might not have been then collected; the same, except the multiplying and the extension;—

the extension, until there is hardly that spot upon the globe on which it has not shed the light of immortality—and the multiplying, until the powers of calculation are insufficient to estimate the myriads of its duplicates !

Blessed be God, who, compassionating our infirmities, while he calls upon us for faith, vouchsafes “ a cloud of witnesses ” for our encouragement—“ Lo I am with “ you, always, to the end of the world.” A company of humble men—men the very humblest, as to worldly circumstances—were to subsist to the end of the world ; to subsist in association with the Lord of the universe !—not by report, not by representatives ; but in themselves ! They *themselves* were to subsist to the end of the world ! Not only Matthew, John,

James, Peter, and Jude; but the rest; for though we are destitute of any personal record from the remaining six, yet their *actual* testimony breathes along with that of the former. Andrew, James the son of Zebedee, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, and Thaddeus, speak to us, as well! Gospel, history or epistle; we peruse the document of all! And in that document have all survived through the lapse of upwards of eighteen hundred years—and will live though the term should be quadrupled! And what write Mark and Luke, but the minds and souls of the eleven?—and what is Paul, great as he is in himself, but the spirit of the eleven? In any *one* of the apostles we have the pith and marrow of the *whole brotherhood*, so that, had only one of them written, we

should have had the whole brotherhood in that single one. And in themselves *alone* could they have thus survived. Not in Ignatius, or Clement, or Augustine, or Jerome. With the gospel of Matthew, what need have I to pin my faith upon the sleeve of St. Optatus, or St. Leo the Great, or Pope Innocent, or upon that of any other pope whatsoever? Here is Matthew himself! I shall listen to the apostle. It is the Spirit that speaks in him! I shall hearken to the Spirit. It is the Holy Ghost, perfect, infallible; and he who adds to Matthew or takes from Matthew, in the name of the Spirit, utters falsehood to the Holy Ghost. We must believe the Holy Ghost, before Pope Pius, of this, or of any other age! No matter how wise, how liberal, how humane, how

devout. Contemplating the former as a mere human being, we may admire him for these graces ; but contemplating him as a servant of Jesus Christ, we reject him upon the testimony of his acknowledged Master ; for, by that testimony, he betrays that Master even worse than Judas did ; inasmuch as Judas fell, through the lust of filthy lucre, whereas the pope sins from divers lusts, corrupting multitudes by his example ! We *dare not* make any allowances for the prejudices of education, or for the influence of dogmas, inveterate from the corrupt sanction of ages. *There* is the Bible ! *There* are the tables of the Christian's law ! *There* are Christ and the apostles ! *There* is the promise fulfilled — “ Lo I am with you alway, “ to the end of the world.” That man

is without excuse who learns, of man, what Christ and the apostles never taught ; especially when he can go for instruction to Christ himself, and is told by Christ himself so to do—" Come unto me
" all ye that labour and are heavy laden,
" and I will give you rest. Take my yoke
" upon you and learn of me ; for I am
" meek and lowly ; and my yoke is easy,
" and my burden is light."—" Come unto
" me !" No mediator named between Christ and the sinner !—as how indeed should there be, *when none can know the heart of man but God ?* " Learn of me !" Christ himself our instructor ! But the apostles instruct us ? No ! It is Christ *in* the apostles that instructs us. But Christ gave to the apostles the power of binding and loosing ? He did ; and they retain it to this moment ; and will retain it to the

end of time. There has not been, is not, nor ever will be, a sinner bound or loosed except through the agency of the apostles. But Christ is the life of that agency. The apostles work because Christ is with them; and Christ is with every sinner that is saved, but in company with the apostles. Men preach; and men hear, through the apostles; but it is Christ, *with* the apostles that gives efficacy to hearing and preaching, or rejects those acts because they are not performed in accordance with His will. Now where is the need of popes and of cardinals? We have Christ himself and the apostles themselves! Christ invites us to come to Him, and the apostles show us the way to Him, and persuade us to take it—their only vocation—and with the blessing of God, we shall do so, without the help of cardinal or pope!—help never contem-

plated by the Saviour, when he said to His disciples, “ Lo, I am with you alway, “ to the end of the world.” With *you* ; not with any one of them exclusively, but with all—as He is in his word and in the Spirit, giving efficacy to that word.

But Christ “ *most certainly designed* “ *that the form of government which he* “ *established in his church should remain* “ *for ever.*” Why, then, has Rome altered that form of government? From what features of the church which Christ established, does Rome copy her list of church dignitaries? Of which of his disciples did our Saviour make a cardinal, an archbishop, a vicar-general, a legate, a nuncio, an inquisitor?—to mention but a *few* of the Roman sacerdotal grades. But, if Christ most certainly designed that the form of government which he established

in His church, should remain for ever, he most certainly designed that the church which He established should remain for ever—*remain*—be unaltered. How comes it that the Roman church has dared to deviate from the church of Christ? Where, in the church, established by Christ and his apostles—in the church of the first century—where do we find the mention of holy water, penance, the mass, extreme unction, purgatory, the invocation of the Virgin Mary, and of the saints?—John the Baptist, James, Stephen, and Mary, died in this century. We have records of the church during a period of nearly fifty years, subsequent to the decease of the last—who is alluded to only once; and that, in the first chapter of the Acts; and there as Mary, not as *the Virgin Mary*—a title given to her in

honour of that Roman fable, her perpetual virginity—it being also tolerably evident, that there existed no invocation of *her* or of the saints, John, James and Stephen, in the church of that century. But to proceed ; where do we find in the first century, any sanction for images, canonization of saints, celibacy of the clergy, indulgences, dispensations, auricular confession, or the establishment of any thing like the inquisition ? No where. How then has Popery preserved the unity of the church which Christ established ? By disregarding that unity and erecting a church of its own—erecting it upon the arch heresy, that not Christ, but Peter is the rock !

“ He has no form nor comeliness, and
“ when we shall see Him, there is no beauty, that we should desire Him.” Thus figuratively, are foretold the circumstances

under which our Saviour should appear, and which should characterize the whole of his ministry. A total absence of those things which usually constitute the objects of worldly desire, and the constant presence of their opposites. His birth should be mean ; His occupation humble ; He should be poor. He should be sought, loved, followed, for nothing that attracts, endears, attaches the generality of mankind. His influence should owe nothing to the present, but perishable riches of this life, but should derive all its virtue from the imperishable, though prospective riches of the life to come.

Consistently with this divine economy, His disciples were chosen from among the noteless and the indigent ; and His doctrine expressly and constantly repudiated the lusts of the flesh—pride, luxury, covetous-

ness. His kingdom was not of this world. What kind of a church was it to be expected that He would found ? Rich ? No. Ostentatious ? No. Domineering ? No. His spiritual church would, unquestionably, eschew such qualities, and His visible church would, as unquestionably, correspond with his spiritual one. Visible or spiritual, His church is recognized in the *Acts of the Apostles*, in the *Epistles*, and in *Revelations*. Among other characteristics, self-denial, simplicity and humility denoted it ; and where these exist not, the church that professes to have been planted by Him, does not make good her pretensions ; and justifies us in believing that, though He may suffer her, as it is foretold He would—as it is foretold that He would suffer the church of Mahomet—still, as sure as the word of God will

stand, there will come the time when she shall be uprooted—thoroughly !

PETER'S CONNEXION WITH ROME A FABLE,
THE DEVICE OF ANTICHRIST.

But—did Peter ever set foot in Rome ? Scripture replies in the negative. Not even the shadow of support, can those who maintain the affirmative, extract from Scripture. The word of God invests him, singly, with no commission to convert the Gentiles ; except in the solitary instance of Cornelius.

Whatsoever may have been the destination of others among the apostles, Peter, along with James and John, was appointed to the circumcision. We have two epistles of Peter, both of which are addressed to Jews. Twice, in the first of these

epistles, does he allude to the Gentiles, and in such terms as unmistakably prove that his ministry did not include that people in general. That his second epistle had precisely the same destination as the first, is self-evident. "This second epistle, "beloved," he says, "I now write unto "you ; in which I stir up your pure "minds by way of remembrance." That he never went unto the Gentiles after his having been rebuked by Paul, at Antioch, is an inference which thoroughly consists with his shameful desertion of the converts there ; as well as with Paul's declaration that, when he and Barnabas went to the heathen, Peter, along with James and John, went unto the circumcision. James, in accordance with Paul's statement, addresses his epistle to the twelve tribes : and if it be urged by the advocate

of Rome, that John's first epistle is addressed to converts of every denomination ; let it be remembered that the earliest date assigned to it, places it after the death of Paul, when the charge of the general church may naturally be supposed to have devolved upon the *last* of the apostles.

ABSENCE OF POSITIVE SCRIPTURE EVIDENCE
IN FAVOUR OF PETER'S LABOURING AT
ROME.

There exists no scripture evidence of Peter's having ever regarded himself as an apostle, commissioned to co-operate in the general work of converting the heathen, in addition to his labours among his own people. The single transaction at Cæsa-rea—and no other is recorded with reference to him—does not by any means constitute him a Gentile apostle. He was the

first apostle that opened “ the door ” indeed ; but *there* his instrumentality stopped. Those that thereafter entered, were urged by another to crowd in. No scripture Christian can view Peter’s mission to Cornelius, otherwise than as an isolated transaction, preparative to the broad Gentile ministry of Paul—than as a note of preparation for the *general* bringing in of the heathen through the preaching of that apostle—than as a warrant for their incorporation into the flock of Hebrew Christians, smoothing the way for their reception by that flock. The peculiar scruples of the latter were thus prepared to be overcome ; as we find they were from what is stated in the eleventh chapter of the Acts, where Peter is brought to task for having gone in unto the Gentiles and eaten with them—a charge, the recollection

of which caused him to waver and dissimulate at Antioch, so much did the “head shepherd” stand in awe of a portion of the fold—and from the fifteenth chapter of the same book, where the question of circumcision is debated, with reference to the Gentile converts. Such as far as the evidence of scripture bears directly upon Peter’s history, is the whole extent of his apostolic labours among the heathen.

PRESUMPTIVE SCRIPTURE EVIDENCE OP-
POSED TO ROME.

Equally unfavourable to the cause of Rome is the presumptive evidence supplied by scripture. We read in the Acts at the fifteenth verse of the nineteenth chapter: “But the Lord said unto him,” Ananias, “go thy way; for he—” Paul, “is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my
“name before the Gentiles and kings, and

“ children of Israel.” Here Paul’s peculiar mission to the Heathen and their kings takes precedence. He is sent especially to *them*. His ministry, as regards his own people, extends only to such of them as he may chance to find located among the heathen. Paul writes to the Romans, in the thirteenth verse, ninth chapter of his epistle : “ I speak to you Gentiles, inas-
“ much as I am the apostle of the Gentiles.”
“ Not *an* apostle, but *the* apostle. Sophistry—Roman Jesuistical sophistry itself—would in vain attempt to thrust in Peter. here. It is equally baffled in the fifteenth and sixteenth verses of the fifteenth chapter :
“ Nevertheless, brethren, I have written
“ to you the more boldly, in some sort,
“ as putting you in mind, because of the
“ grace that is given to me of God, that
“ I should be the minister of Jesus Christ

“ to the Gentiles.” “Here again, it is not *a* minister, but *the* minister. If, in both these instances Paul does not distinctly declare that he regards himself, in relation to the rest of the apostles, as being exclusively appointed by God, to prosecute the bringing in of the Gentiles, I have yet to learn in what perfect perspicuity of expression consists. Either he completely shuts the door against Peter or any other of the peculiar apostolic brotherhood, or he commits a falsehood ! He is not *the* apostle of the Gentiles—He is not *the* teacher of the Gentiles ; but, together with one or more of his equals, a *common* labourer in the work.

Nor can the church of Rome take any advantage of certain texts, in which at a more advanced stage of his ministry, Paul speaks of himself as “ an apostle—”

“ a teacher.” The former term he now employs in its *generic* sense, in which sense Timotheus, as well as other disciples of Paul, had become apostles ; having been *sent* by Paul to preach the word in various distant parts ; or to superintend, as his agents, the affairs of certain churches, which it was out of his power to visit in person. It is in this sense that he applies the term in the plural number, to Silvanus and Timothy, along with himself, as we read at the sixth verse of the second chapter of the Thessalonians : “ Nor of any
“ man sought we glory ; neither of you,
“ nor yet of others ; when we might have
“ been burthensome, as the apostles of
“ Christ.” The manly modesty of Paul, the total disregard of *self* in his zeal for his master’s cause—are strikingly conspicuous in the opening of certain of his epis-

ties. He begins—"Paul, an apostle of
"Jesus Christ, by the will of God; and
"Sosthenes, our brother."—"Paul, an
"apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of
"God; and Timotheus our brother."—
"Paul and Timotheus, the servants of
"Jesus Christ."—"Paul and Silvanus
"and Timotheus, unto the church of
"the Thessalonians." He humbles him-
self, in order to bespeak respect for his
agents or disciples; that the work may
thereby be the more effectually forwarded.
Consistently with the same principle,
when with perfect propriety he might be
chargeable to the churches, he maintains
himself by the labour of his own hands;
well knowing that he who would promote
a general cause, strengthens his advocacy
by manifesting the absence of any selfish
interest therein.

POSITIVE EVIDENCE OF PETER'S MINISTRY
BEING CONFINED TO THE JEWS.

Paul, in the seventh, eighth, and ninth verses of the second chapter of Galatians, expressly defines Peter's apostleship, limiting it to the Jews. He says, " When
" they saw that the gospel of the uncir-
" cumcision was committed unto me, as
" the gospel of the circumcision was
" unto Peter—for He that wrought effect-
" ually, in Peter, to the gospel of the cir-
" cumcision, the same was mighty, in
" me, towards the Gentiles—and when
" James, Cephas and John, who seemed
" to be pillars, perceived the grace that
" was given unto me ; they gave me and
" Barnabas the right hands of fellow-
" ship, that we should go unto the hea-
" then, and they unto the circumcision."

If this be not claiming exclusively for himself, along with Barnabas, a subordinate labourer, the work of Gentile conversion ; and assigning, as exclusively, to Peter, along with James and John, the converting of the Jews,—I have yet to be taught the significancy of language ; or how the plainest and most perspicuously stated proposition, can be placed beyond question or cavil, as to its real meaning. The evidence of every other part of Scripture, where a reference to the matter in hand can be traced, consists, wholly and unmistakeably, with the sense of these verses. Nor is that sense at odds with the parting address of our Lord as we read in Matthew—“ Go ye there—“ fore and teach all nations, &c.” Though the whole of the apostles had laboured among none but their own people, still

had they been virtually the teachers of all nations—as they are to the present day. *Personally*, in the body, it was *impossible* that they could teach all nations. James the brother of John was martyred in the *tenth* year of the church.

PETER NOT IN ROME DURING PAUL'S
FIRST RESIDENCE THERE.

The time, comprised in the book of the Acts, includes two entire years, after Paul's first arrival in that city, without there occurring any mention, whatsoever, of Peter ; who could not by any possibility have officiated there, during that period, without some allusion having been made to the fact, by Luke ; who thus concludes his narrative — “ And Paul
“ dwelt two whole years, in his own hired
“ house, and received all that came in

“ unto him ; preaching the kingdom of
“ God, and teaching those things, which
“ concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with
“ all confidence, no man forbidding.” It
is not, I repeat, within the compass of
possibility that Peter could have been
preaching in Rome, during the whole of
this time, or during any portion of it—
more especially, if, according to the Ro-
man dogma, he had been endowed with
any headship, or princeship, over the rest
of the apostles. The co-operation of any
one of the apostles, more particular of the
chief or prince of them, could not have
been thus overlooked, disparaged, denied !
It would have been a heinous sin in Luke,
to give Paul what was not his due—the
whole credit of the work ; as he unquestionably
does—and Luke was guided by
the Spirit !

PETER COULD NOT HAVE PRECEDED PAUL
IN ROME.

Neither could Peter have preceded Paul in Rome, as some of the so-called fathers have vainly endeavoured to prove that he did. What say the Jews to Paul, when the Apostle, immediately after his arrival in the imperial city, calls them together, in order that, consistently with the doctrine and example of our blessed Lord, the proffer of salvation shall be made, in the first instance, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel? What say the Jews on this occasion, “We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren,”—Jews, “that came, showed, or spoke, any harm of thee ; but we desire to hear what thou thinkest ; for, as concerning this sect,

“ we know that, everywhere it is spoken
“ against.” The Jews at Rome had never
set eyes upon Peter !—They knew nothing,
by report, but evil of the sect, to which
Peter now belonged—of which they would
have learned nothing but good, had Peter
previously to Paul’s arrival, so much as
set foot in Rome !

PETER COULD NOT HAVE BEEN IN ROME
AFTER PAUL’S RETURN.

There is but one chance for “ The
Church,” as Rome styles herself—the in-
terval which occurs between Paul’s depar-
ture and return ; and of that opening let
her make what profit she can, in the ab-
sence of any scripture authority what-
soever, respecting the posture of Christian
affairs in the imperial city, during the

whole of that period. But, from the time of Paul's return, till that of his martyrdom, scripture perspicuously places the two apostles as wide apart, as Rome stands removed from the one or the other of the two Babylons.

ANTICHRIST IN THE TITLE OF PETER'S
EPISTLES.

The titles prefixed to the first and second of Peter—as well as that which the single epistle of James has received—are of purely Roman invention. They are manifestly false. The immediate destination of all these writings was not “general” but specific. With equal propriety might the same title have been bestowed upon Paul's epistle to the Hebrews.

Now, as the legitimate titles stared

Rome in the face, as that of Paul's epistle did *not* — *James's epistle to the "twelve tribes"* — *Peter's first and second epistle to "the strangers ;"* — why did she not adopt these titles, instead of substituting ones of her own? May it not be fairly conjectured that Peter being essential to her—when the leaven of ambition began to work ; when the prospect of universal sway began to dawn upon her ; when the heresy of a human rock for the establishing of God's church started up in her imagination, like sin from the brain of Satan ; when the dogma of apostolic succession beguiled her^{*} with the promise of sole and perpetual domination —she saw the policy of bespeaking credit for his having participated in the general work of heathen conversion? How else, could she claim him for her first, or joint-

first, bishop? An apostle, who, according to scripture had never engaged in that work; whose mission, according to scripture, was limited to his own people; who, according to scripture, had never addressed a single epistle to a Gentile church; would hardly be believed to have presided over the church of Rome, an overwhelming majority of the members of which must have necessarily consisted of heathen converts. The policy of Rome, in this instance may be inferred from its mere results, with relation to *Protestant* theologians. In reference to Peter's first epistle, the version before me remarks—
“ *He wrote this epistle, as is generally allowed, a little time before his death, to the Christians, doubtless, both Jewish and Gentile converts, in different provinces of Asia Minor.*”

Peter's epistles, though profitable for Gentile as well as Jew, were in the first instance intended solely for the edification of the latter. "The strangers, " scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, " &c." are identical in nationality with "The twelve tribes which are scattered " abroad," addressed by James, and with the Hebrews whom Paul addresses. To no other description of converts could the term "strangers" possibly apply. No man of sane mind would undertake to argue that the term was employed to indicate Gentile converts, natives of other parts; but now located, temporarily or permanently, in the several regions enumerated. How could Peter distinguish settlers from natives? How could it have come to pass that none, but the former, had been received within the new

pale? Now that the Jew, even though converted, and allowing that his family might have resided for generations in any Gentile locality, might be correctly designated a "stranger" is manifest from Peter's own bearing at Antioch. If the national prejudice, which he, along with "certain" that "came from James," had imbibed before conversion, was so ingrained as to produce the effect of influencing shamefully and perniciously the conduct of the Apostle; much more might such a cause be supposed to operate upon the deportment of mere disciples, so as to have preserved in them the characteristics of "strangers."

Thus the very first verse precludes all controversy respecting the immediate destination of the first epistle; but, in order to shut, utterly, the mouth of sceptical,

vexatious cavil, I shall glance at the remainder of the internal evidence.

The eighteenth verse of the first chapter indicates, exclusively, the lineal descendants of Abraham. "Forasmuch as ye
" know that ye were not redeemed with
" corruptible things, as silver and gold,
" from your vain conversation, *received by*
" *tradition from your fathers.*" This passage is manifestly applicable to none except Hebrew converts.

The twelfth verse of the second chapter separates the Gentiles from those to whom the apostle writes: "Having your con-
" versation honest among the Gentiles;
" that, whereas they speak against you as
" evil-doers, they may, by your good works
" which they shall behold, glorify God
" in the day of visitation." This is not

the language of one who was addressing Gentiles as well as Jews. Nothing can be more obvious, here, than the inference that the day of visitation had not yet dawned upon the Gentiles, through the ministration of Peter—with the solitary exception of his mission to Cornelius.

The twenty-fifth verse is equally in point: “For ye were as sheep going
“astray; but are now returned unto the
“Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.” This cannot bear reference to a people to whose fathers God had never revealed himself, and who, previous to conversion, were themselves strangers to God. How could such a people be represented as “going
“astray?” or as having “returned unto
“the Shepherd and Bishop—” into whose

fold they had only just been brought ; in whose fold their fathers had never been included, except in prophetic anticipation ?

To the same effect, speak the fifth and sixth verses of the third chapter : “ For
“ after this manner, in the old time, the
“ holy women also who trusted in God
“ adorned themselves ; being in subjection
“ unto their own husbands ; even as Sarah
“ obeyed Abraham, calling him lord ;
“ whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do
“ well, and are not afraid with any amazement.” This cannot apply to any but the lineal female descendants of Abraham and Sarah ; and, lest advantage be taken of the conditional clause with which the passage concludes, I refer to the same doctrine in Romans, ninth chapter, and sixth verse :

“ For they are not all Israel, which are of
“ Israel.”

In the third and fourth verses of the fourth chapter, Peter speaks of the Gentiles detractively and indiscriminately, thereby still more obviously excluding them from his mission : “ For the time past of
“ our life may have sufficed us to work
“ the will of the Gentiles ; when we walked
“ in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine,
“ revellings, banquetings, and abominable
“ idolatries ; wherein they think it strange
“ that you walk not with them to the same
“ excess of riot ; speaking evil of you.”
Peter most assuredly would not have written thus, had he been addressing Gentiles as well as Jews. In such a case he would have indicated, clearly, that his vituperation referred solely to the *unconverted* among

the heathen—as Paul does in the Ephesians : “ This I say, therefore, and testify, “ in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not “ as *other* Gentiles, in the vanity of their “ minds.” Again, in his first epistle to the Thessalonians : “ Not in the lust of “ concupiscence, as the Gentiles, *who* “ *know not God.*” Where, in his epistle to the Galatians, Paul writes, “ We who “ are Jews by nature, and not sinners of “ the Gentiles,” he by no means insinuates that the Jews are not also sinners, as the verse immediately following most distinctly shows : “ Knowing that a man is not justified by the law.”

One more quotation from this epistle. Its exclusive, immediate destination is apparent from the seventeenth verse of the fourth chapter : “ For the time is come

“ that judgment must begin at the house
“ of God ; and if it begin at us, what shall
“ the end be of them that obey not the
“ gospel of God ?” The Jews were pre-
eminently “ the house of God ;” and
though Paul, employing the same phrase
in the fifteenth verse of the third chapter
of his first epistle to Timothy, applies
it to the whole body of believers, yet does
he use it in its original and specific sense
in Hebrews, tenth chapter, twenty-first
verse, as the context clearly demonstrates :
“ Having therefore, brethren, boldness to
“ enter into the Holiest, by the blood
“ of Jesus—by a new and living way ; and
“ having a High Priest over the house
“ of God ; let us, &c.” The obvious re-
ference, here, to a way that was old, which
can mean nothing but the law, proves that

the apostle contemplates a people who had been living under the law. So in Peter, the limited application of the phrase is confirmed by the context : " Judgment must " begin." With whom ? Whom but the Jews—the people of pre-eminent responsibility ; to whom the oracles of God had been committed ; from among whom sprang the prophets ; who had been the object of numerous manifestations of the direct superintendence of God ; of whose flesh God was made man ; to whom Christ was first visibly presented ; among whom, and by whom, the new covenant was sealed in the blood of Christ—the people with whom revelation began, and with whom it was continued exclusively, with scarcely a pause, for nearly two thousand years. Judgment must begin with some ; with

whom else could it so properly 'begin? To whom else could Peter so properly refer when he declares that " Judgment must " begin at the house of God."

The internal evidence of the second epistle, though not so voluminous, is, if possible, still more conclusive. The first verse of the third chapter assigns to both epistles one and the same direct destination: " This second epistle, beloved, I " now write unto you."

But the seventeenth verse declares expressly that they to whom Peter writes are identical with those whom Paul has directly in view, in his epistle to the Hebrews. Peter writes: " And account that " the long-suffering of our Lord is salva- " tion ; even as our beloved brother, Paul, " also, according to the wisdom given unto

“ him, hath written unto you ; as also in
“ all his epistles, &c.” Here is an allusion
to a particular epistle of Paul’s ; which
epistle Peter distinguishes from all Paul’s
other epistles ; which epistle must have
included, in the persons to whom it is im-
mediately addressed, converts located in
Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and
Bithynia. Now, there is but one work of
the Gentile apostle, which can by possi-
bility be shown to tally with this statement
of Peter’s—the Hebrews.

This alone is sufficient to settle the
question. The title which Rome has as-
signed to the first and second of Peter, and
to the single epistle of James, is not the
legitimate one ; is not scriptural ; receives
not the smallest countenance from scrip-
ture ; bears design and subtlety upon the

very face of it ; while the truth that it is noon when the sun attains the zenith, is not more self-evident than the fact that Peter, in writing his epistles, adhered most strictly, as it was unquestionably his duty to do, to the peculiar, exclusive work, which, according to the declaration of Paul, had been assigned to him, along with James and John—" the apostleship of the " circumcision."

I have omitted, as superfluous, any allusion to evidence precisely, though not in extent, the same as that upon which the Hebrews has received its title ; namely, occasional reference to scripture history, made in such a manner as to indicate, on the part of the writer, the knowledge that those whom he addresses are perfectly familiar with the subject.

PETER PROVES THAT HE HAD NEVER LABOURED IN ROME.

We read at the twelfth verse, fifth chapter of this epistle, “By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose.” Silvanus, according to the nineteenth verse, first chapter of the second epistle to the Corinthians, is a fellow labourer of St. Paul, who writes, “For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by me—even by me, Silvanus and Timotheus—was not yea and nay ; but, in him, was yea.” The date of this epistle is A.D. 58 ; that of Peter’s is 63. Peter directly insinuates a personal knowledge of *all* Paul’s epistles, heretofore written. From the epistle of Paul’s which I have just quoted, as well as from others of his writings, in which Sil-

vanus is named ; and, also, from 'Silvanus's own account of himself, when this disciple, doubtless, prosecuting the work, lights upon Peter at one or the other of the Babylons ; Peter infers the character of Silvanus. Still there evidently exists, in the apostle's mind, some ground for caution. Why ? Because they have never met before ; their communion has been brief ; and Peter, shrinking from thoroughly committing himself — actuated by the same characteristic self-distrust which occasioned his fall at Antioch — speaks of him *guardedly*. Peter's epistle could not have been written from Rome. Peter could never have resided at Rome ; otherwise he could entertain nothing less than a perfect knowledge of Silvanus's faithfulness. The fidelity of so distin-

guished a disciple of Paul's could not possibly be a secret to his brother apostle, had that apostle been at any time engaged in co-operating with him. To start a doubt whether the person, whom Peter introduces, be the same that Paul speaks of, or a different man, bearing the same name ; will be of no avail. To the hands of no ordinary person would Peter have committed so precious a document as his epistle. The person, whom he intrusts with it, is clearly no disciple of his own ; otherwise he must have thoroughly made up his mind, with respect to the integrity of his messenger. Silvanus preaching the word in different parts, either in obedience to Paul, or at his own option, finds Peter, residing at either the Egyptian or Chaldean Babylon ; and thus presents

the opportunity of which the apostle avails himself to forward his missive.

ABSENCE OF ANY ALLUSION TO PETER,
IN THE EPISTLES WHICH PAUL WRITES
FROM ROME.

Paul, writing from Rome, alludes, by name, to sundry of his fellow-labourers, but he never mentions Peter. Only in one of his other epistles does he speak of him, and then disparagingly, and not as his yoke-fellow, in the work. Now had the two apostles ever inhabited for any length of time, the locality of Rome ; some evidence of the fact must have appeared in the writings of the one or of the other of them. If together, they must have co-operated ; had they co-operated, it must have transpired. Paul, at least, in his last epistle to Timothy,

could not have gratefully remembered Onesiphorus, without paying a tribute to Peter—*though Peter had been dead at the time*—had they ever laboured together. Recollecting his austere, astounding rebuke of Peter—recollecting that, in a document which he knew was never to be obliterated—I say “*knew*,” because the Spirit that guided his pen could not have left him in ignorance that the brand would be stared upon by generation after generation, to the end of time—recollecting that in such a document, he had charged him with the sin of pernicious dissimulation—keenly eager would he have been to avail himself of any opportunity which would justify him in making amends, by graceful, generous commendation; and that opportunity Peter would have assuredly afforded him,

had identity, or contiguity, of residence permitted.

I defy any man who is unprejudiced by mere human assertion—by the statements of a church which is carnally interested in *every one* of the peculiar dogmas which she advocates—I defy any such man to rise from the perusal of ~~Luke~~ Luke's history, and of the epistles of Paul and Peter, without the firmest conviction that Paul is the only one of the apostles who can pretend to have laboured in the church of Rome. Such is the only inference which any one can draw from the word of God ; poised against which, the testimony of mere man is not entitled to so much as a grain of weight.

The further I prosecute this subject, the more am I convinced that what “the

church," advances, respecting the transactions and death of Peter, in the city of Rome, amounts to nothing more than a mere romance, but a romance with a pernicious moral. The nature of that moral I infer from its effects—the lusts which it has subserved to excite and pamper ; lusts ranging from the least venial, gain and undue authority, to the most revolting that have ever disgraced and corrupted mankind. I appeal, in support of what I assert, to the avowed discipline, and to the notorious history of "the church." The dogma of a presiding church was the first heresy. This dogma Ignatius supports. Ignatius was a disciple of some one of the apostles ; Ignatius was a martyr ; but what of that ? Peter was one of the apostles. Peter was a martyr also.

Yet Peter erred. “ Erred,” do I say ? Sinned is the fitter word ! Contagious dissimulation was, in his case, especially, a sin ; and not a slight one. If it was possible for an apostle to sin, much more was it possible that a disciple of one of the apostles might sin. A presiding priest was the next stone in the building of “ the church,” and that stone was subsequently laid. There wanted, however, an authority. Paul might have served, and Paul was at hand ; but there existed no ground from which might be deduced the specious plea, that he was invested with any jurisdiction over his brethren. No more was Peter, in point of fact. Compared to Paul, he plays but a secondary part in the history of the primitive church, of which history Paul is, beyond all question, the paramount human theme—the glorious unparalleled

hero ! But might not Peter be turned to account by searching the evangelists ? The evangelists were resorted to. Rome lights upon the eighteenth of Matthew ! Thence the hint was taken, that by a carnal interpretation of the sixteenth verse, the heretical dogma of a presiding priest—of a universal bishop—might be successfully promulgated. Further enquiry flushes incipient success ! Peter's investment with “ the keys ”—with the power to bind and loose—no matter though the rest of the apostles are subsequently endowed with the same identical power ; our Lord's exclusive prayer for Peter, that he may be delivered from Satan ; the precedence given to his name in the enumeration of the brotherhood ; together with the *momentous* facts of the Saviour's preaching

from Peter's ship, and paying the same tribute for himself and Peter ; all these things, carnally interpreted also, would conspire to warrant the erection of the arch heresy, and to insure its recognition as a scriptural truth. But Peter must be brought to Rome!—*Must !* True there exists no scriptural evidence of his having ever been there. The Acts make no mention of such an occurrence, but inferentially, at least, deny its having taken place. The same is the predicament of Rome, with regard to the Epistles. Never mind ! Shut the Epistles and the Acts. Rome cannot do^o without Peter, and to Rome must Peter be brought. Whosoever originates the feat, Papias records its perpetration—records it approvingly—Papias, whom, as it appears, Eusebius charac-

terizes as *one of a very weak and undiscerning judgment, who derived many things, strange and unheard of, from mere tradition!* Irenæus, one hundred and forty years after Peter's *alleged* first arrival in Rome, repeats the tale of Papias ; and thus may the overpowering concurrent testimony of the numerous "fathers," as they are called, be reduced in weight to that of a single man, and he upon the authority of Eusebius, a very insignificant one.

Let me now endeavour to ascertain the degree of credence to which the evidence of Papias is entitled. It stands *alone!* condemningly alone ! No single preceding nor cotemporary testimony has ever been adduced or appealed to in proof of its correctness. Even conjecture holds its tongue

with regard to the existence of any such testimony. The evidence of Papias justifies suspicion rather than trust. “*Suspicion*,” do I say. I ought to say, and *do* say—absolute, uncompromising discredit. Had Peter ever been bishop of Rome, the knowledge of the fact, together with that of all the dogmas connected with it, would have grown up with “the church.” It would have been familiar to every Christian throughout Europe, Asia, and Africa. Ignatius would have been spared the superfluous trouble of recording Rome as “the presiding church,” and Papias had never been put to the pains of assuring us that Rome had been honoured with the residence of the apostle.

But, upon the authority of Papias, Peter’s first epistle general is written from

Rome. What ground has Papias for advancing this statement? This, namely, that the apostle dates his letter from Babylon!—or seems to date it thence; sending from the church there, salutations to those whom he addresses. Let us see what Challoner says upon the subject.

“Does the scripture any where affirm that St. Peter was at Rome?”

“St. Peter’s first epistle seems to affirm it, chap. v. 13. Where, by Babylon, the best interpreters understand Rome, so called by the apostles, as afterwards by John in the Apocalypse, because of its being the chief seat of empire, and of heathenish idolatry, as formerly Babylon had been. And so this place is understood by St. Papias, and Clement of Alexandria, alleged by Eusebius, by venerable Bede, Æcumenius, and others.

Nor is there any probability that the Babylon here mentioned, could be that of Chaldaea, which at that time was nothing but a heap of ruins ; nor that in Egypt, which was but a very inconsiderable place in those days, and in which no monuments of antiquity give us the least hint that ever Peter preached."

" But if the scripture had been entirely silent upon this matter, we have it proved by universal tradition, which is the means by which we come to the knowledge of scripture itself." This is an attempt to establish a strange argument, namely, that believing in scripture, upon the evidence of tradition, we must believe tradition when it asserts what is totally at odds with scripture. Whereas the true argument is this : namely, that by attesting the genuineness of scripture,

tradition justifies the rejection of every dogma, an express warrant for which is not to be found in scripture. But what does Challoner mean by the proof of “universal tradition?” *Universal!* What a mountain he casts upon his adversaries! Examine it, and the enormous mass dwindles into nothing, or what is next to nothing—the solitary attestation of Papias, as recorded by Irenæus; the successors of whom, without a single additional ray of light upon the subject, adopt what he states. This is argument in the estimation of priestcraft; but it will not pass with the merest tyro in logic,—far less with the Christian. But to return.

PETER DOES NOT MEAN TO INDICATE ROME,
BY WRITING “BABYLON.”

None of the apostles, except John, re-

presents Rome under the title of Babylon ; and when John writes thus figuratively, he refers to the Roman church, and to nothing but the Roman church, as she is presented to him in prophetic vision. It is Christianity relapsed into heathenism, and “drunk with “ the blood of the saints ”—of the pure in faith, who condemn and resist—that he contemplates. The churches are the theme with which the Spirit commences ; and that theme is not departed from, when the Spirit comes to Rome under the title of Babylon. *Heathen* Rome—Rome, heathen in the strict sense of the term—has no participation whatsoever in the awful charges and denunciations which the Spirit thunders forth against the Babylon of Revelations. The man who can take a contrary view of the matter, must be either devoid of reason, or, what is worse, must

be wilfully^o blinded to the truth. All that the Book of Revelations alleges, prospectively, with reference to Babylon, has been fulfilled in the church of Rome—all except her downfall ; and towards that she has advanced something more than a stride or two. A priest of that church must be pressed indeed for an argument, when he resorts to Revelations for one ! He had need to be blind—or to affect blindness—to the fact, the glaring fact, that it is his own church which is palpably, fearfully delineated there ; and not Rome, as “ the “ chief seat of empire and of heathenish “ idolatry ”—though empire, it is true, was once the boast of the Roman church ; and though idolatry, first authorised by her at the commencement of the eighth century, continues in her to the present day.

That the Chaldean Babylon was “ *a heap*

of ruins at the time," is of little avail to Rome, when it is known that the Jews, at that time, continued to flock thither ; and of like moment, as an argument, is the insignificance of the Egyptian Babylon. That identical circumstance would have afforded Peter leisure for constructing his epistle ; and from all that we can discover in scripture, relative to the "alleged Prince of the Apostles," he was not incontinently industrious in respect of giving employment to his pen. Only *eight* chapters does he enrich us with, in his two epistles taken together ; while the single epistle of Paul to the Hebrews consists of *thirteen* ! Paul's epistolary labours amount to no fewer than *a hundred and nineteen chapters* ; while those of Peter number no more than *eight* ! Strange, that, with this fact alone staring her in the face, Rome should

have dared to assert the headship of Peter, to the manifest depreciation of Paul ! But what sacrifices of reason, right, truth, humanity, decency, honour, religion, have not been perpetrated for the compasing of despotic sway—not only in him who has snatched a crown to which he had no claim, but in the multitudes of *creatures* who have connived at his act of usurpation.

ABSURDITY OF SUPPOSING THAT PETER
INDICATES “ROME” WHEN HE WRITES
“BABYLON.”

But, in his first epistle, Peter indicates Rome where he writes Babylon. What ! *when he writes from Rome ?* Why, it would have been nothing less than incurring, gratuitously, the most eminent risk ! His epistle was intended for general circu-

lation, among the converted of his own people ; enemies were already to be found in the very bosom of the churches ; the influence of the imperial city extended to every quarter which his letter was likely to reach ; and numerous were the channels through which the stigma that he would have cast upon her, in such a case, might have reached the city that was the object of it ! *Peter, despatching a public document from Rome, brands her with the name of Babylon !* It would have been to incur the charge of the most hare-brained rashness. It would have been a manifest, audacious tempting of God. Does Luke, or does Paul write “ Babylon ” for “ Rome ? ” Why then should Peter ? Peter was far too circumspect, where his own security was concerned, to commit himself so egregiously. The man who seeks countenance

of "certain brethren, from Joppa," when he is actually going on a mission from the Holy Ghost; who appeals to those brethren for their approval of that which the Holy Ghost has already *palpably* sanctioned; who, in the anticipation of being questioned by the church, takes those brethren up along with him to Jerusalem, that their testimony may insure his exculpation—so much did "the alleged chief shepherd" distrust the deference of his flock!—such a man, I say, was too cautious, too much under the influence of self-distrust, too much a respecter of persons, to vilify, without any chance of gain, but with the most certain prospect of the heaviest loss, the city of which he was a resident. Peter writes "Babylon," because he is residing at Babylon.

THE TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF PETER A
SELF-EVIDENT FICTION.

Let me now display the mass of accumulated, obvious fictions, with which Rome has endeavoured to commend her arch fable to credence. Let me, upon the evidence of her own shewing, expose what is false, by contrasting with it, her treatment of what is true. Little does she add to the scriptural history of Paul, whose connexion with Rome is established beyond the possibility of question. She contents herself with telling us that he made many converts, among the higher, as well as among the lower orders of Romans ; that the former included one Torpes, an officer of prime note in Nero's palace ; that Nero's cupbearer, as well as a concubine of the tyrant's, embraced the faith ; that, in revenge, he resolved upon

the death of the apostle ; that, upon his way to execution, Paul converted three of his guards, who subsequently submitted to martyrdom for his sake ; that he was beheaded at the Aquæ Salviæ ; that something, more like milk than blood, flowed from his veins, which, spirting on the executioner, converted him, along with many others ; that he suffered in the sixty-eighth year of his age ; and that this took place on the same day, and in the same year, that Peter was crucified, or on the same day in the following year, or not until several years after—so vague in this respect is the knowledge of “ the church ” regarding this most glorious of the apostles !

Let me now turn from what is alleged respecting the naked truth, to what is advanced in favour of the elaborately dressed up fable.

A miracle honours Peter's approach to Rome. The standards of a soldiery, upon the point of rebellion, stick so fast in the ground, that no human force can remove them ; whereupon the mutineers are reclaimed, and turn in revenge upon their ringleader.

Peter, arriving at Rome, resides at first among his own people ; but, disgusting them by preaching to the Gentiles, is expelled from their society.

He goes and dwells among the Gentiles, across the Tiber.

He is taken in by one Pudens, a senator, recently converted.

He contracts an intimate acquaintance with Philo, the Jew.

Along with other Christians he is banished from Rome by the Emperor Claudius.

He returns, after the death of Claudius.

He finds the people bewitched by the sorceries of Simon Magus.

Contending with Simon Magus, he restores to life a kinsman of the emperor's.

Praying to Christ, he scares the Devil, by whose assistance Simon Magus accomplishes the miracle of flying in the air. The sorcerer, in consequence, falls to the ground, and receives such damage as eventually terminates his existence.

Nero, resenting the discomfiture and death of Simon Magus, and further irritated by the conversion of *divers dissolute women*, through the preaching of Peter ; throws him, along with Paul, into prison—Paul having assisted Peter in opposing the magician.

He now writes his second epistle.

Urged by the Christians to make his escape, he gets over the prison-wall.

He is encountered by Christ at the city-gate.

He asks Christ where he is going, and Christ replies, " to be crucified."

Rebuked by the answer of Christ, he returns to his bonds.

He takes his leave of Paul, previously to being led to execution.

He prevails upon the officers to crucify him with his head downwards, as being unworthy to suffer in the same position as his Lord.

His body, when taken from the cross, is embalmed by the presbyter Marcellinus.

He is buried in the Vatican, near the Triumphal Way.

A small church is soon erected over his grave.

This church being destroyed by Helio-

gabalus, his body is removed to the cemetery, in the Appian Way.

It is restored to the Vatican by Pope Cornelius.

It remains there, somewhat obscurely, till Constantine builds a church over the site of the grave ; &c.

Now let it be taken into consideration that none of these particulars transpire, except here and there, in the writings of some of the so called fathers ; and that all those writings bear dates, more or less, postcedent to the account of Irenæus, where he records the fable of Papias.

The miracle which celebrates Peter's advent, bears the broad stamp of popery. It cannot claim the most remote affinity to any one miracle of the New Testament.

The relation that Peter resided, first, among his own people ; then, among the

Gentiles ; that Pudens the senator, lodged him ; and that he became acquainted with Philo, the Jew ; is an obvious attempt, by colouring fiction with circumstantiality, to make it pass for truth.

The banishing of Peter along with other Christians, by the Emperor Claudius, is a manifest invention ; as the twenty-first and twenty-second verses of the twenty-eighth chapter of the Acts, afford an incontestible proof, that no one of the apostles had ever set foot in Rome before Paul preached there, in the reign of Nero, the successor of Claudius.

Let those believe in the return of Peter, who have credulity enough to attach faith to his departure.

Peter's contests with Simon Magus have just as much truth in them, as his departure and return—just as much truth as the

miraculous flight of the magician, through the agency of the Devil. The alleged assistance of Paul makes the matter worse. The manly, fearless, uncompromising Paul, had he been present, would have served Simon Magus, in much the same manner as he did Elymas, the sorcerer ; and, though Nero had been looking on, would have heeded Nero, no more than he did Sergius Paulus.

If Peter wrote his second epistle when Paul was in bonds along with him, he forfeits all credit for being animated by the spirit of brotherhood ; he convicts himself of the grossest, most contracted selfishness ; he disobeys the commands of Christ, and forfeits the fellowship of the Holy Ghost ; by casting no thought upon the fellow prisoner whom he had dragged into durance along with him ! This alone might settle the

question as to the locality whence Peter's second epistle was addressed. Peter must have been hundreds of miles away from Rome when he wrote it. The advocates of tradition consult anything but their Bibles. The most atrocious enemy of the faith could not cast a more blasting aspersion upon the character of Peter, than to assert that he wrote his second epistle, when he was in prison with Paul, at Rome !

Even more disgraceful would be Peter's escape from prison leaving Paul in the lurch. And here the Christians of Rome would come in for their share. Could they have entertained the least solicitude about the safety of Peter, without casting a thought upon the similar jeopardy of the noble Paul ?

I cannot trust myself with commenting upon the blasphemous indecency which

introduces Christ into this tissue of falsehoods.

Peter's taking leave of Paul is palpably an incident invented with the view of securing to the "prince of the apostles," the honour of priority in point of martyrdom. Hence, also, is it, that different dates are ascribed to the death of Paul—as different dates are given to Peter's supposed advent, with the view of establishing the belief that he preceded Paul in Rome.

The alleged manner of Peter's crucifixion is at first sight a plausible, but upon examination, a most shallow and pitiful invention. Let those who have credulity enough to believe what is palpably improbable, attach faith to the statement that a criminal could have regulated the mode of his execution; and that, at the hands of the officials—the very last description of per-

sons likely to act upon their own responsibility—to act upon it under the eye of a savage and inexorable master ! But slight is even this objection, in comparison with the fact that crucifixion was a mode of punishment adopted for its cruelty ; practised from the long protracted agony which attended it ; and, on that account, executed only upon those who were not Roman citizens. *Reversing the position of the culprit would have reduced the throes of the criminal to less than a fiftieth part of their ordinary duration !* Congestion of the vital organs ; or the effect produced by checking and ultimately stopping the flow of the venous blood ; would have speedily suspended consciousness ; so that, instead of hanging alive upon the cross, for hours, perhaps, longer than his Master did ; Peter would have been released from his suffer-

ings, almost as soon as they had commenced. Neither he nor his executioners could have been so stolidly ignorant, as not to have been aware of this. To have consented to such a mode of putting a criminal to death, would have been, in them, an act of mercy, totally out of character ; and for him to have solicited it, would have been an act of quailing, utterly unworthy of one, who was on the point of receiving the crown of martyrdom. Upon this plain, rational, and conclusive view of the case, I feel myself warranted in asserting that “ the church,” in her account of Peter’s crucifixion, convicts herself of total ignorance as to the time, the place, or the manner of his decease.

The embalming of Peter’s body by the presbyter Marcellinus, is another attempt to invest fiction with the colouring of

truth, by resorting to specious circumstantiality.

The naming of the place where his body is alleged to have been buried, is a contrivance akin to the foregoing.

The speedy erecting of a church over his grave, is an instance of creature worship which could not have occurred at the time—which could not have been perpetrated by a people just reclaimed from heathenism, and freshly loathing their recent state of idolatry. And, mark the proof of this—*Paul goes without any such monument until the year three hundred and eighteen.* The contemporaries of Paul, the Christians of the first century, when the churches were at the purest — cast not a thought upon posthumous earthly honours. Their regards were too intently, too absorbingly, fixed upon the crown that

awaited their apostle in heaven. They would have dreamed as soon of prostrating themselves before a graven image, as of dedicating a pile of mason work to Paul. It was not until "the church" began to abase her thoughts to the pondering of things that relate to worldly gain and glory ; that a temple was obtruded upon the Christian grave of the Apostle. Challoner dismisses the idea that Peter wrote his first epistle from the Egyptian Babylon, upon the seemingly plausible ground that no monument of antiquity records the fact of his having laboured there. Had Challoner examined the question with spiritual scrutiny, he would never have resorted to so preposterous an argument. On the contrary, the presence of monuments would have induced him to doubt the hypothesis

which he vainly endeavours to establish in favour of another locality. Had “ the church ” been as circumspect as she has been aspiring, she would have suffered Peter’s *fabled* grave to remain without any memorial—at least, until she thought proper to honour the actual grave of Paul.

The exhuming, re-interring, exhuming again, and re-interring again, of Peter’s remains, afford a tolerably conclusive argument in favour of the presumption, that the spot in which those remains are deposited, has yet to be ascertained.

Such is the testimony—so flagrantly suspicious in over-acted incircumstantiality so unlike truth in every other feature ; so diametrically at odds with the whole presumptive evidence of scripture, as regards

the history of this apostle ; such is the testimony which Roman Catholic tradition adduces, with the view of substantiating the claims of “the church,”—claims which, in the judgment of any candid, rational, and unprejudiced mind, must melt into the sheerest delusion, when it is considered, that, had the Redeemer ever allotted to Peter the part which Rome has assigned to him ; or, to Rome the part which she has arrogated to herself ; the fact would have been as clearly, as authoritatively set down in the Book of Life, as any one of the fundamental doctrines of salvation.

And, now, let us test the tree by its fruit. Bitter is that fruit !—Fruit, bitter to very rottenness, upon the evidence of *Roman Catholic* writers. Thus do they describe the church in the tenth and ele-

venth centuries. “ Stupor, insanity, and forgetfulness of morals invaded the minds of men. All virtue fled from the pontiff and the people. This whole period was characterised by obduracy, deformity, and inundation of overflowing wickedness. The Roman church was filthy and deformed. Holiness escaped from the world, and God seemed to have forgotten His church — Faith was not found on earth. All flesh had corrupted their way. Justice, equity, virtue, sobriety, and the fear of God, perished, and were succeeded by violence, fraud, stratagem, malevolence, circumvention, luxury, drunkenness, and debauchery. All kinds of abomination and incest were committed without shame or punishment. The nobility were the slaves of gluttony, appetite, and sensu-

ality. All, in common, passed their nights in protracted drunkenness ; and provoked surfeit by voraciousness, and vomit by ebriety. Piety and holiness had fled from the earth, whilst irregularity and iniquity among all, and, in an especial manner, among the clergy, everywhere reigned. The sacraments, in many parts of Christendom, ceased to be dispensed. The few men of piety thought the reign of anti-christ had commenced, and the world hastened to its end."

The picture which " the church " presents in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, is yet more revolting. " Piety and religion seemed to bid adieu to man ; and for these were substituted treachery, fraud, impurity, rapine, schism, quarrels, war, and assassination. The throne of the beast seemed to be fixed among the clergy ; who neg-

lected God, stained the priesthood with impurity, demoralized the people with their hypocrisy, denied the Lord by their works, and rejected revelation, which God gave for the salvation of men."

Thus is "the church" depicted, as she appeared in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. "The church is come to such a state that she is worthy of being governed only by reprobates." Petrarch calls Rome "Babylon; the great whore, the school of error, and the temple of heresy;" and laments "the dereliction of all piety, charity, shame, sanctity, integrity, justice, honesty, candour, humanity, and fear of God." Mariana exclaims: "Every enormity had passed into a custom and law, and was committed without fear; shame and modesty were banished; while, by a monstrous irregularity, the dreadfulest out-

rages, perfidy, and treason, were better recompensed than the brightest virtue. The wickedness of the pontiff descended to the people." Eugedius says: "Lasciviousness reigned. All kinds of atrocity, like an impetuous torrent, inundated the church; and, like a pestilence, infected nearly all its members. Irregularity, ignorance, ambition, unchastity, libertinism, and impurity triumphed. Violence, rapine, adultery, incest, and all the pestilence of villainy confounded all things, sacred and profane." Merandola writes: "Men abandoned religion, shame, modesty, and justice. Piety degenerated into superstition. All ranks sinned with open affrontery. Virtue was often accounted vice; and vice honoured for virtue. The sacred temples were governed by wretches unworthy of the name of men. The re-

treats, formerly sacred to unspotted virgins, were converted into haunts of obscenity and abomination. Money, intended for sacred purposes, was lavished on the filthiest pleasures ; while the perpetrators of the filthy defilement, instead of being ashamed, gloried in the profanation."

Thus Antonius, addressing the fathers and senators assembled at Trent, describes " the church " in the sixteenth century : " Each succeeding day witnesses a deterioration in devotion, divine grace, christian virtue, and other spiritual attainments. No age had ever seen more tribunals, and less justice ; more senators, and less care of the commonwealth ; more indigence, and less charity ; or greater riches, and fewer alms. This neglect of justice, charity, and alms, was attended with public adultery, rape, rapine, exaction, taxation, op-

pression, drunkenness, gluttony, pomp of dress, superfluity of expense, contamination of luxury, and effusion of Christian blood. Women displayed lasciviousness and effrontery ; youth, disorder, and insubordination ; and age, impiety, and folly ; while never had there, in all ranks, appeared less honour, virtue, modesty, and fear of God ; or more licentiousness, abuse, and exorbitance of sensuality. The pastor was without vigilance ; the preacher, without works ; the law, without subjection ; the people, without obedience ; the monk, without devotion ; the rich, without humility ; the female, without compassion ; the young, without discipline ; and every Christian, without religion. The wicked were exalted ; and the good, depressed. Virtue was despised ; and vice, in its stead, reigned in the world. Usury, fraud, adultery, forni-

cation, enmity, revenge, and blasphemy enjoyed distinction ; while worldly and perverse men, being encouraged and congratulated in their wickedness, boasted of their villainy.”*

Spare the page of the Protestant historian ! There is no need of it. The annals of the Roman church, herself, pronounce her ample, emphatic, unqualified condemnation. Millions, however, acknowledge her. No wonder ! Superstition inculcated from the very cradle ! Amulets ; relics ; miracles ; idolatry, that arch resister to the worship of the living God ; priestcraft, restlessly upon the watch ; the lusts of the eye and the lusts of the ear assailing the too yielding heart, under the specious plea of spiritual observances ! And mark the stal-

* For these extracts I am indebted to Edgar's Variations of Popery.

wart bulwarks with which the citadel of antichrist is propped and defended. Consider them well, and note how thoroughly they suit—how perfectly in keeping they are with the character of the main building. First, blasphemous denial of the all-sufficiency of God's own word!—next, infallible authority to teach!—and lastly, implicit obedience in receiving instruction! Thus, in the outset, is enquiry stopped at the very fountain of true knowledge. Thus is precept delivered without let, and accepted without scruple. The Roman Catholic layman is taught to believe that he sins, if he thinks for himself in matters of religion—and so is the Roman Catholic priest; but what the latter pays, upon the one hand, he enjoys the consolation of exacting, upon the other. One huge, monstrous, idol has been substituted in

the place of the Trinity—Tradition! and in that idol what a motley abomination does the scripture Christian contemplate! —an idol at whose shrine Christ, in more senses than one, has daily, and for centuries, been crucified anew.

She makes converts from Protestantism? She does—where Protestantism has not cast her wholly off; but *sympathizes* with her, in her lust for certain fleshly things; and bears a strange affinity to her. Does she make converts elsewhere? If she does, the secret of her fascination is to be found in the adaptation of her wiles to the weakness and corruptness of human nature. Contemplate the seductive influence which her meretricious adornments are calculated to exercise upon the carnal heart — her tricked-out altar, her pictures, her images, her censers, her gold and silver, and her

jewels. Consider her ceremonies—things of seducing mystery. Examine her processions, within and without the temple—pageants in which the supposed body of Him who forbids the sword to be drawn, is frequently preceded, brought up and begirt with files of bayonets—guarding a wafer !

I find the Church of Christ in scripture ; but I cannot find the Roman Catholic church there—except in prophetic, denunciatory anticipation. Here, indeed, I find her. There is not a single peculiar dogma of that church which Christ and his apostles have not foreseen, and for which they have not prepared a disclaimer and a rebuke. *Not one !* She has been the chief custodian of the Book of Life ? She has ; and to a strange account has she perverted the trust with which along with other

churches she was invested. It was committed to her to be diffused. She has endeavoured to keep it to herself. She has sealed it ; locked it up. To other hands than hers are we indebted for its multiplying and its spread—jealous of which, as hostile to her schemes of overleaping ambition, she has prohibited it ; she has burned it ; she has branded it with a *lie*, denying its all-sufficiency—the all-sufficiency of Omniscience and Omnipotence ! Ponder the condition of mankind, wheresoever you can trace the footsteps of her sway. The earth is parched and rotten with arid ignorance, through lack of the living waters, which the Deity has amply provided, but which man has withheld, or diverted. She languishes, though she knows not for what. Knowledge—worldly knowledge—now approaches her

meridian fast ! Before the half of the nineteenth century is well complete, human art and science have achieved things which smile at the exploits of a thousand preceding years. Distance is almost annihilated ; wind and current are defied ; lightning, at the will of man, plays in all the gradations of its power—becomes his messenger, with wing of fire, while the sun enacts his limner and draughtsman ; torture is disarmed of her throes ; the simplest agents displace the most ample and boastful ; man inquires, not what *can* I do, but what can I *not* do ;—and yet is the ocean of human passions upturned from its profoundest depths, and rolls and foams, destructively on every side. Nations at war within themselves, or with one another, or looking for war ! One overcast heaven, and one troubled earth ! The clear-

ing up and the calming—how are they to come, and when?—They that humbly await the answer, and with faith—the only faith—scriptural faith—not the faith of tradition—can alone await it, without trembling. Tradition? Look at Spain! Portugal! Italy! Sicily!—France!—yesterday a despotism; to-day a republic; and to-morrow—what? Look at Austria! Mexico! cast your eyes whithersoever you may, where the sway of tradition is to be traced, and contemplate its fleshly concomitants and results. This, church of Rome, this is *your* work. Instead of the true rock, you are built upon a mound of sand. Already more than once has “the rain” descended; have “the floods” come, and “the winds blown upon you;” and fearful, upon each occasion, have been the loosening and the washing away. The fall?

It is threatened, and the threat will be kept ; it is described, and to the letter will it be fulfilled ; its time is appointed, and that time is at hand. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God ; and those hands have you, for centuries been tempting ! And again and again have they remonstrated with you ! *Another* antichrist, who robbed you of half your domains, did those hands raise up against you. Servants have they commanded to come out from you, who made huge inroads upon the remainder. An imperial son of yours, the tool of your ambition, he whom the timely-remembered blush of Sigismond saved from an atrocious breach of royal faith—saved from the perpetration of an act of savage murder, commended and urged by you—he, caused by those hands to rebel against you, assaulted

and sacked you ! Another imperial son reduced you, for a time, to vassalage ! What next ? All around you are the rumblings, the tremblings, and the heavings of a huge moral earthquake. Your head is a fugitive !*—a fugitive at the close of the year 1848, the precise year in which the prophetic term of your temporal sway runs out. “ What next ? ” Would it might be repentance, and in time ! Even His declared purpose has God foregone, at the appeal of the contrite and broken spirit !

* The blasphemies in which, with reference to this event, certain Roman Catholic Prelates, located in these dominions, have been so utterly lost to shame as to indulge, are as extraordinary as they are scandalous. Common sense—common decency—ought to have prevented them from perpetrating the enormous sin of comparing the living God to the poor perishable *worm* before which, in the rankest spirit of idolatry, they prostrate themselves, and exultingly, luxuriatingly, grovel !

Church of Rome, fling away your tradition ! It is the word of man. Fling it away ; and take, instead, the Word of God to your heart. In that word, you will find the true Rock—God !—Christ !—yet another have you dared to exalt, for your own pernicious aggrandisement. There is *no* other, except in the mal-construction of a text, which to the carnal mind alone can seem to admit of two interpretations—one of the spirit, the other of the flesh ;—one scriptural, the other traditional ; *nor even that, without dissent among your boasted, miscalled “fathers.”* Look at the predicament in which you stand ! Listen to inspiration ! “WHO IS A ROCK SAVE OUR GOD ?” Listen to yourself, “*Peter is a Rock, as well as God !*” Reconcile these two positions if you can. Plead not the authority of Christ. God cannot contra-

dict Himself !—God cannot utter falsehood ! You misrepresent Christ, you dishonour Him, deny Him, when you quote Him as the authority for your fundamental dogma—YOUR ARCH AND BLASPHEMOUS FABLE.

THE END.

